[*And say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge—Qur'ān*]

THE
ISLAMIC CULTURE

AN ENGLISH QUARTERLY

GOLDEN JUBILEE
COMMEMORATION VOLUME

1927–1976

Published by

THE ISLAMIC CULTURE BOARD
HYDERABAD – 500 007, A.P. INDIA

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Allah's is the East and the West, whithersoever ye turn, there is Allah's visage. Allah is all-embracing and All-knowing. (Qur'ān II, 115)

Islam appeared in history as a call to God, as a message which purported to emanate from a divine source and which aimed at a radical transformation of man and his society. Hence the message which in its religious dimension had a transcendental accent was in practice a challenge to the establishment, a cry of war against the religious as well as social hierarchy which arrogated to itself the function of divinity.

Islam understood its call from the very beginning as a re-call, a call which has not sounded in history for the first time but a call which is affiliated with the mission of the prophets gone before, of prophets of whom we have definite knowledge and of prophets of whom we are ignorant. Thus Islam from the very moment of its birth offered a dual aspect, a metaphysical and a historical. The Islamic witness, the ***shahādah***, bears this out eloquently. I as a Muslim bear witness to Allah and at the same time bear witness to the prophethood of Muhammad, a historical figure through whom the message is conveyed. The Muslim is committed to the belief that Muhammad as the bearer of the message does not make his appearance by sheer accident of history but by divine dispensation. This mutual involvement of history and of metaphysics permeates Islamic experience, and any attempt to smother either of the constituents violates the spirit of the message addressed to mankind some 1400 years ago. If the Qur'ān, as the word of God, has an eternal reference, it is nevertheless addressed to man immersed

in the flux of time and history. If the source is infinite it is conveyed through a limited person in the vocabulary of finite beings.

The great crisis through which Islamic consciousness is passing today is born of the inability to strike a healthy balance between permanence which comes of its transcendental reference and change which comes of its historical context Now one is either so enamoured of permanence as to envisage any change in the socio-economic and political responses of Muslims, a betrayal of the spirit of Islam or so 'desacrilised' as to consider the transcendental moment of religion as of no relevance in re-forming the pattern of Islamic life in consonance with man's growing knowledge as it is transmitted through secular sciences. The eternity of the message is not by any means affected if we take into account the fact that the eternal is always conveyed in a language which corresponds to a given milieu and its understanding at a given moment of history is subject to historical conditions.

That the Prophet of Islam should have been born in a society which was remote from civilization and in a corner of the world which was isolated and practically cut off and that he should have been able in a short span of time to transform the wild hordes of the desert into the torch bearers of a civilization which is very much alive today appears as a marvel of history, and however ingenious may be the explanations which try to make economic factor and historical coincidence responsible for the success which has no paralled in history, the fact remains that the person of the Prophet and the tremendous impact of the religion that he 'founded' on history have not been amenable to a satisfactory causal explanation. The ideological simplification would have us believe that "if Muhammad had never been born, the situation would have called another Muhammad in his place." In fact the 'ifs' of history are

fictions. What has happened could not have happened otherwise, as possibilities which have become actual in one complex of events could not have found any realisation in another setting. But was his appearance a caprice of Chance? It is open to one's own judgment either to hold the creative vision of God responsible for the religious upheavals which have shaken history or to consider all such revolutions as 'accidents.' History cannot be explained by recourse to any machinistic causality or by invoking chance as deus ex machina. Whether we like to commit ourselves to a religious perspective and see in the historical development the finger of God or try to see in the creative personalities themselves dynamic forces which move history, the emergence of the Prophet of Islam is no coincidence

The German scholar Dr. Johann Fuck admits with remarkable candour: "Never will the means of rational science suffice to unveil the mystery of the personality of this man and never will we be able to establish searchingly what experiences moved his soul that he was led through anguished conflict to the conviction of his being chosen by God to be a warner and a messenger."[2] The attempt to see in the book that the Prophet brought and in his own acts and life the reproduction of the past and to mark therein this conscious and unconscious dependence on religious traditions which preceded him, cannot affect the identity of Islam as a phenomenon which is as much new as it is old. As no creative individual in spite of his biological and cultural ancestry can be explained exhaustively with reference to what he owes to the past and what he inherits from it, the religious movement which a religious genius initiates cannot be explained by recourse to his affiliation

(1) M. Rodinson: 'Mohammad,' (1973), p. 298.

(2) Johann Fuck: 'The Originality of the Arab Prophet,' p. 171, Der Koran, Edited by Rudi Paret, German Edition, 1975, Darmstadt.

with the past. The Islamic accent can never be missed whether in the beginning or in the course of its long history, all deviations notwithstanding.

With the spread of Islam to areas far removed from the place of its birth it has naturally been exposed to the infiltration of foreign modalities of thought and attitude and yet, in spite of its receptivity to cultural cross-currents, Islam has been flexible enough to assimilate and absorb the foreign material and subject it to transformation in such a way as to make it acceptable to the main ethos of Islamic life, But unfortunately it has all too often been forgotten both by Muslim and non-Muslim students of Islam that the image of Islam which the early period presented, the period in which the messenger himself was active and present and in which his own contemporaries and associates were involved, was a response to the conditions which then prevailed. Islam as a phenomenon of universal relevance, however, cannot be identified with its historical manifestation at any particular point of time. Hence its historically conditioned responses cannot be reproduced in every part of earthly space and in every period of time without undergoing some qualifications and adjustments which the shift in time and place might demand, and yet the Islamic identity can maintain itself without foregoing its affiliation with its sacred past. It is clear then that the Qur'ān, which guides the life of the Muslims and which embodies for them the word of God, does not and cannot yield all its meanings in one swoop. The Qur'ān and the Prophet continue to play a dynamic role and with new generations the Qur'ān can reveal new meanings and new surprises and constant engagement with the divine word may open novel perspectives for those who reflect. This means that as the Qur'ān and the life of the Prophet and his teachings have not exhausted their meaning in history, our understanding of the Qur'ān may develop and advance in ways which were not suspected before.

An eminent philosopher has declared that religion is what a man does with his solitariness and he has referred also in this context to the "broodings" of Muhammad in the cave. But this statement is true only when it is understood with some qualification. The brooding of many a soul could not find any way out of its retreat in the broad daylight of history and many an earnest seeker of truth could only blush unseen without any impact on the world without. But the Prophet was able to go beyond his occupation with himself and was able to stir out of the Cave without letting his gaze swerve by the light which peeped from beyond and without letting his course be deflected by the noise which roared outside. He was indeed able to make his way against heavy odds and was to transform not only the world in which he lived but to mould the untold generations which were to come. No wonder if this has tended to create in the faithful the belief that it did not depend on the man himself to make his message heard but it depended on Him whom vision does not attain to invest His mission with historical potency. The Muslim, if he has to remain true to the spirit of Islam, has to recapitulate in his own life the threefold movement as it is reflected in the life of the Prophet and this means that to follow the Sunnah is not to go by it in a mechanical manner in matters which do not matter but to imbibe its spirit in matters which have an existential accent and which impart meaning to life

Islam begins in seclusion, in being with one's own self in silent meditation and in self searching, then the insights which are gained in retreat are made effective in society to agitate history. The withdrawal of the Prophet from the world in the first instance and his intrusion in the world in the second instance is again followed by a retreat in loneliness to resume communication with the eternal Mystery. This is of course the ideal pattern of the authentic Islamic life to which everyone cannot reach, though

everyone is expected to approximate to it to the best of his ability. Action which is not illumined by contemplation is blind and contemplation which cannot yield its meaning for history is vacant, to use the language of Kant. However, action is not to be understood in any limited significance. It need not confine itself to public life, to political struggle or to historic decision Struggle or *jihād* with oneself and contemplation as engagement with God in loneliness or as reflection on the signs of God in their manifold manifestations in history and nature do not stand in mutual isolation. Action and contemplation need not be contrasted and construed in a static frame of reference but in a dynamic involvement in which they vary according to the situation of the persons involved. The action of a statesman may have tremendous repercussions in the outside world and the contemplation of a Sufi in retreat may go beyond the confines of his cell to bring about a radical change in the social and political patterns of life. Thus when it is said that this world and the other world do not stand against one another in Islam, this must not lead to the conclusion that the non-separation of the state and *dīn* must involve derecognition of all secular occupations or enjoyments. It only means that any decision which man makes, any occupation which he undertakes, his own pre-occupations and aspirations, his domestic life and happiness should not be allowed to develop an ultimacy in their own right lest they should delink man from all transcendental reference. Involvement of God in man's life at all levels is characteristic of the Islamic orientation. Any attempt made to politicise this divine involvement or to silence the voice of dissent by forced conformity is to strip religion of all authenticity.

Thus the main problem with the Muslim today is to discern and to discriminate between what is permanent and what is liable to change, to own the past with full responsibility and yet to respond to the present challenge crea-

tively, not to disown tradition but to strike a balance between modernity and tradition in all spheres of life. The Quranic injunction not to exceed the measure is not restricted to business ethics but breathes the very spirit of Islam in communal relationship as a whole; it is to keep balance between two extremes in all our dealings. The misers who hoard are condemned with as much vigour as the profligates who are given to waste and extravagance. On the spiritual plane balance is struck between fear and hope and on the plane of metaphysical ethics equidistance is maintained between individual freedom and responsibility and God's omnipotence and omniscience. While on the one hand man does not carry the load of the other and is pledged to his own deeds[3] and no action of his goes to waste however trivial it may be, the hearts of the unbelievers on the other hand are said to be sealed so that they cannot hear even though they have ears and they cannot see even though they have eyes. It is clear that the Qur'ān refers to different planes and the seeming contradictions arise only when we fail to take into account the levels of reality to which these different statements apply. A delicate balance is held between fear and hope. Whilst fear is not allowed to cripple man in his action, hope is not allowed to make him feel immune to God's Judgment.

The Quranic position to create a middle course is specially evident in the problem of man's freedom. Even secular philosophies have not achieved any success. Either it is held that though man is not free he must act as if he is free, taking freedom as a useful fiction; or it is said that he is not empirically free but that freedom is an Idea in which man must have faith and this is as much as to relegate freedom to the trans-empirical dimension of man's existence, to his nou-

---

(3) Qur'ān, LXXIV-38. كل نفس بما كسبت رهينة

menal self. In any case, while Muslim theology has tried bravely to find a solution in this ever-puzzling problem and has put forward ingenious theories of ***kasab***, or acquisition, to reconcile the omnipotence of God and His preordained system with responsibility of man, religious experience as such finds no difficulty in considering God as all in all and yet holding man responsible for his actions. Indeed religious experience remains indifferent to the logical dichotomies of either-or. But we are not at present concerned with theological and metaphysical issues. The Qur'ān remains true to facts and inconsistencies and conflicts which we might find in the Quranic statements and declarations really reflect the ambiguity with which human reality itself is riven. Existence is not cut according to a clear theoretical scheme or model and it is left to Islamic theology and philosophy to accept the challenges which reality presents and which the Qur'ān reflects as also to deal with them with their own finite resources of intellectual perception and linguistic equipment.

The society to which Islam addressed was morally depraved and intellectually naive. The Islamic war cry of ***Allah-u-Akbar***, God is great, was a challenge to idolatry at all its levels, be it explicit or implicit, and the unequivocal declaration of the supremacy of God was not only meant to eliminate pseudo-deities but also to create a new consciousness which is free from all gross superstitions. The valuational concepts which had a primitive reference suddenly underwent transformation. The *ḥamiah* (حمية) in which the Arabs took pride was stripped of its tribal accent and affiliation and the same process of linguistic conversion affected the key terms of *jahiliah* (جاهلية) ethics. They were either, shelved from their pivotal role or brought in conformity with the new Islamic ethical sensitivity. The warring Arab tribes which used to fight for tribal supremacy and

vendetta were now integrated and unified into one *Ummah* which, though it began as an Arab phenomenon, developed into a universal brotherhood, which was soon to sink its Arab individuality into newly emerging Islamic identity.

The Japanese scholar T. Izutsu has given a semantic analysis of the key Quranic terms to show how radical was the transformation that the Qur'ān brought about. The echo of the surroundings in which Islam was born and grew could not be immediately silenced but became fainter and fainter. And the slow but certain movement of Islam away from its original confines offered both a challenge and an opportunity. So long as the holy Prophet lived he was able to give decision on the basis of divine revelation, but when his living presence was not available for guidance his example and the Book that he left served the purpose. But the holy Scripture itself contains verses which may be understood as they are and verses which are liable to different interpretations, and while the regulation of the practical affairs and legislative action may by based on the *muhkamat* (محکمات) theological, philosophical or mystic, speculation is left free room to exercise its ingenuity on the *mutashabihat* (متشابہات) And when the verses of the Qur'ān are liable to be interpreted differently, the recourse to the judgment of the contemporaries of the Prophet cannot be of much help, as even here unanimity is not always available and traditions present a conflicting picture. The fact remains that as human beings they could not claim infallibility and their judgments remain subject to the historical limitation, and that in matters of speculation their intellectual equipment could not be expected to cope with speculative requirements. It will be against the spirit of Islam to think that the Quranic visions have found complete understanding in any given period of history and that no new light can be thrown on its understanding. With the

passage of time new developments were bound to happen and even for old insights new language was to be found. If the Quranic words are understood differently by modern interpreters it does not necessarily follow, though it may also happen, that their interpretations are wilful distortions but may as well answer to a different intellectual direction and orientation and correspond to a different level of understanding. If, for example, God swears by *'aṣr*, (عصر) one may take it as a ritual prayer which is performed between other prescribed prayers or the time in which it is performed or the time as the pervasive feature of man's being in the world. Hence a philosopher, a mystic or a linguist may find the meaning of the Qur'ān in conformity with his own interest and bias. Again, the conflict may as well arise between modernists and conservatives by a shift of emphasis and lead to different conclusions. To take two examples, one from a very practical and day to day situation and the other from a question of theological controversy. The advocates of polygamy, for example, will see in the restriction of number a significant departure from the promiscuity which prevails in primitive society, whereas modernists will see in the qualificatory and conditional clause nothing short of virtual prohibition. The theological problem relates to the Islamic vision of salvation. While the modernist may consider the Quranic verses which speak of those who believe in God and hereafter, by they Sabeans, Jews or Christians, to deserve a posthumous status in which sorrow and fear touch not, the orthodox conservative interpretation will call to support the verses which speak of a dismal future for those who do not hearken to the Call.[4] Ours is an age

---

إن الذين أمنوا و الذين هادوا و الصابئون و النصارى من آمن بالله و اليوم الآخر و عمل صالحا فلا خوف عليهم ولاهم يحزنون ٥

(4) Qur'an v. 69.

of confrontation and the Muslim theologian has yet to be alerted to the complexity of the problem he has to deal with. While no one can dispute that the foundation of Islam rests on the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, it is yet to be recognised that the exegesis of the scripture and the way the traditions are transmitted and the persons through whom they are transmitted were historically conditioned and their knowledge was itself sociologically subject to the limitations of their times. The modernist should equally remember that his modernism is also a historical phenomenon and that every epoch has its blind spots and unwarranted assumptions, and prejudices can creep in as much in the name of nationality as in the name of religion. What is now needed is not only a critique of tradition but also a critique of rationality and modernism as every human phenomenon has its limitation and the moment it transcends its bounds it is apt to develop a new form of tyranny more cruel than the first.

Shah Waliulla of Delhi seems to have anticipated the challenges with which Islam was to be confronted. Jamaluddin Afghani and Muhammad Abduh of Egypt, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Iqbal and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the Indian subcontinent, may be credited with pioneering attempts in the re-assessment and reconstruction of Islamic thought in its philosophical, theological and juristic aspect. The modernist attempt to consider religion as a private concern and debar it from any role in public life can be rightly questioned. Of course religion is personal so far as it is related to the 'depth dimension' of man's life, though this 'depth' need not be confined to one's privacy but can be made meaningful in inter-personal relationship. The personal response also may be nourished and sustained by tradition and history. However, when religion becomes nothing but a formal compliance with traditional rules and prescriptions and loses rapport with

the spirit which gave them birth it is emptied of its contents. While religion is primarily man's response to transcendence or *ghaib* (غيب), it is at the same time the acceptance of the challenge that God's creation presents and a call to participate in His cause.[5] It must not be difficult for Muslim thought to accept the challenge of secularism by conceding to secular values their rightful place and to develop a flexibility which allows modern forms of relaxation and modern modes of occupation with leisure the right to be within prescribed conditions and limits. (حدود). The 'limits' as to their legal reference may be considered amenable to a re-definition and re-determination which is commensurate with the sensitivities of contemporary life.

Consciousness of problems, it is said, is already a step towards their solution. There have already been trends inside Islam towards self-understanding, and self-complacency has given way to a critical awakening. Challenges to religious consciousness as such have an immediate bearing on the specific Islamic commitment. Rapid strides in science and technology do affect the usual forms of religious behaviour. Hence both at the theoretical and practical level traditional values are questioned and compulsions of modern society do not allow us to stick to the traditional routines and to conform rigidly to the traditional pattern of social practice and way of life. Fortunately, some significant steps have been taken in the recent past towards a re-assessment of Islamic thought and the possibility of re-adjustment in the context of modern conditions is envisaged.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muhammad Abduh set before them the task to re-evaluate and re-think the

---

يا أيها الذين آمنوا كونوا انصار الله

(5) Qur'an, LXI-14.

religious concepts in the light of developments in science and historical criticism. Sir Sayyid tried to develop his own views on the basic religious concepts of Islam, especially on the nature of revelation and prophecy and his answers were largely determined by the level of scientific thinking of his time. It was not only linguistic inadequacy which made his positivistically oriented exegesis of the Qur'ān liable to hostile criticism but also the inaccessibility of the deeper layers of western thought found in languages other than English debarred him from truly appreciating the metaphysical ethos of the Qur'ān. But theological orthodoxy needed a shock treatment and Sir Sayyid's exegesis served its purpose by rousing it from its "dogmatic slumber." Of all attempts at the reassessment of Islamic thought Muhammad Iqbal's stands out prominently. Iqbal had his moorings both in the Western and Islamic tradition and though the problem of demythologisation has appeared in Christian theology with a vengeance, it is anticipated in Sir Sayyid in his treatment of eschatological concepts and Islamic angelology. The same process of demythologisation is continued in Iqbal and his explanation of the Fall of Adam and of the primordial covenant with God breathes the same spirit. But Iqbal's biologically oriented approach requires to be supplemented by the deeper metaphysical analysis of the key concepts of Islamic theology, and the danger to which every attempt at demythologisation is subject is to make short shrift of the mystery which haunts religious consciousness. With Maulana Azad the perspective radically changes. No wonder that the man who stood in the thick of politics throughout his life and who did not find any difficulty in reconciling national interests with the supernational ends of Islam should develop in his exegesis of the Qur'ān a humanistic universalism. But what is unfortunate is his lack of mystic sensitivity. What the Muslim theologian today needs is to assimilate all the important and divergent traditions and to recognise them as an integ-

ral part of his heritage. The re-creation of theological thought is no less important today than the import of technological know-how from the West and familiarisation with the latest techniques of science. Muslim theology then will have to take into account the Sunni tradition with its varied accents, the Shi'ite tradition with its major ramifications, the Sufi tradition which cuts across major schism of Islam and the philosophical tradition of the pre-Ghazzalian as well as of the post-Ghazzalian epoch, especially as it flourished in Iran. It should follow with no less vigilance the ferment in Christian theology and the attempt to develop a 'non-religious' Christianity.[6]

What we call culture is a human phenomenon which embraces all meaningful activities of man and their expression at different levels, be it at the level of science, philosophy, religion, political and economic organisation or on the plane of inter-personal relationship. But when we talk of Islam as culture all that is included in culture assumes a religious accent, whether explicitly or implicitly, and Islamic culture worth its name cannot disown its roots; whatever concessions it may offer to secular requirements, it cannot betray its origin and its transcendental moorings. This Journal, from its very inception has tried to present varied aspects of Islamic life with historical objectivity and theoretical detachment and it has succeeded in winning the cooperation of eminent scholars of the East and the West, Muslims as well as non-Muslim, and has survived fluctuations of history. The essays selected in this volume give an idea, however inadequate, of the variety and diversity of the material in which it has interested itself. As it purports to give not only a cross-section of Muslim opinion on some crucial issues but also the response of the Western savant to the phenomenon that is Islam the selection does not try to give a homogeneous picture but to highlight the multiple

(6) Gustave Thiels: A "Non-Religious" Christianity? New York, 1970.

aspects of Islamic culture which found expression in the Journal in the course of 50 years of its life, and as a result it is not to be wondered at if some important and valuable contributions could not be accommodated. The subjects which are dealt with in the volume which is now presented vary greatly. They include philosophical reflections, political thought, law, literature, education, and study in comparative religion. We will let the authors speak for themselves. We will allow a few introductory remarks only on articles which have somehow struck us. M. Asad Weiss has offered some very pertinent remarks on what he calls a 'resurrection' of Islamic thought. Of all known cultures it is only the culture of Islam the beginning of which can be clearly discerned. But now that religious ideas are petrified and Muslim life has fallen a prey to 'automatism' it is high time to work for the emergence of a new *fiqh* which should answer to the requirements of the modern era. A.A. Fyzee and the late eminent historian Sayyid Ameer Ali are equally taken up with the problem of the reconstruction and reconsideration of Muslim law. Mr. Fyzee pleads for a careful study of the 'ancient rules' and lays stress on the need to examine their relevance and utility in the changed context of life. More than one contribution bears witness to the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought to our present situation. It is in the fitness of things therefore that in the contributions of Professors H.K. Sherwani, Manzoor Alam and Erwin I.T. Rosenthal the figure of Ibn Khaldun should loom large. As Prof. Rosenthal says, "the scholar has, for the first time in history, chosen as the field of his penetrating study human society as a whole" and as a political thinker, he was realistic enough not to allow "the ideal to obscure the lessons of history." Dr. Khalifa Abdul Hakim and Professor P.A. Nicholson try to give us glimpses into the mystic poetry and literature of Islam. K.A. Hakim in another contribution of his offers a critical examination of some of the efforts made in the history of Muslim thought to bring

prophetic experience nearer to understanding Prof. kiotis appreciates Muhammad Abduh's attempt to Muslim Humanism by revitalising "Islamic religion systematic revision and new expression." In fact tributors shed new light on the cultural complex and succeed in making us realise that the whole area of culture is still a virgin soil which calls for intensive r A new theology is yet to be born and a new assessmen history is still to be made. Even the little that is plished beckons to a bright future and we are sure *Culture* will have a great role yet to play in the rejuv of Islamic thought.

DR. S. VAHIDUD
Former Professor &
Dept. of Philoso
Osmania & Delhi Uni

THE MODERNITY OF ISLAM

—Ameer Ali

IN the wreck of religious beliefs and the general slackening of moral conventions, it is pathetic to observe the frantic efforts to salvage some part of it, and build up an eclectic faith. The student of comparative religion will look back on the success of the first Ptolemy in creating the Serapean cult which welded for a time the Greek and the Egyptian, and for centuries dominated the religious consciousness of the Mediterranean littoral.

Whilst Ptolemy Lagus succeeded, Akbar the Great failed. The grandson of the Lion-King also attempted to unite two alien worlds together by a common cult, but the teachings of the Qur'ān and the creed of the Shastras could not be reconciled. And Akbar failed!

Are the efforts of the present-day thinkers to construct out of the wreckage of the old beliefs a system which might appeal to the modern world likely to succeed? I am afraid not; first, because it would be a mixture devoid of the elements essential to awaken the dying religious consciousness of the masses; and secondly because it would be out of touch with modern conceptions.

One Faith alone holds out the promise that the world is not doomed to relapse into darkness or become enwrapt in gross materialism. It still holds aloft the lamp to the road which leads humanity to spiritual vitality. The present conditions, morally considered, are the same as prevailed when the Prophet of Islam made his appearance. Whilst the Platonists and their successors were struggling to solve the

problem of the ***Demiurgus*** and the ***Causa Causans***, and the Manichean was making the Prophet of Nazareth a mere Phantasm of Light, there prevailed all around gross materialism combined with wild superstitions. The spiritual current set flowing by Jesus had spent itself, and the people were in quest of a faith that would revive spiritual life and the recognition of human responsibility to all living beings. Mohammed made no claim to a preternatural personality nor any demand that repelled Reason. He always proclaimed that he was only a man sent to preach and bring back the world to the recognition of Truth. And the history of his life has *not* been converted by his followers into a "faery tale." or his person transfigured into that of a Divine Being. His appeal was addressed both to the agnostic who abounded in his time as well as to the pagan who worshipped "other gods, ' the sun and the moon, the stars and idols of his own fashioning.

Many of his contemporaries, like many present-day thinkers, believed that creation was a mere accident ; that there was no Design in the Universe. He asked the sceptic to look at the marvellous co-ordination which existed in the world and then say it was a mere accident ; to think of his own body and mind and then consider whether there is not a Supreme Intelligence behind nature. The great Teacher perceived in the ordinary phenomena of nature an inter-connection which conclusively showed Design. Ever and anon he preached : "In the creation of the heaven and earth, "and the alternation of night and day, and in the ship which "saileth on the sea, laden with what is profitable to mankind ; "and in the rainwater which God sendeth from heaven, "quickening again the dead earth, and the animals of all sorts "which cover its surface ; and in the change of winds, and "the clouds balanced between heaven and earth, are signs to "people of understanding !"

"He throweth the veil of night over the day, pursuing "it quickly. He created the sun, moon and stars subject to "laws at His behest. Is not all creation and all empire His? "Glorified be the Lord of the Worlds. Say, He alone is God; "God the Eternal. He begetteth not, and He is not begotten; "there is none like unto Him."

"By a soul, and Him who balanced it, and intimated to "it its wickedness and its piety, blest now is he who hath "kept it pure, and undone is he who hath corrupted it. No "defect canst thou see in the creation of the Lord of Mercy."

In all his exhortations to bring back the wandering minds of his people to the recognition of a Supreme Intelligence directing the Universe, the Prophet of Islam never overlooked the duties of family life. He preached that children were entrusted to parents by the Almighty to bring them up to be good and law-abiding citizens; to children he taught that they have a duty to their parents. He insists in his preachings that they should never forget the gratitude they owe to their parents and especially to their mothers for bringing them into the world and cherishing them in their infancy with tenderness and love.

The duties he inculcated are expressed simply in the following words: "Be kind to kindred and servants, orphans, "and the poor; speak righteously to men, offer thy thanks-"giving to the Giver of all gifts, and be charitable. Defer "humbly to your parents; with humility and tenderness say, "'O Lord be merciful to them, even as they brought me up "when I was helpless'! Abandon the old barbarities, blood-"vengeance and child-murder, and be united as one flesh. "Wouldst thou be taught the steep (path)? It is to ransom "the captive, to feed the hungry, the kindred, the orphan, "and him whose mouth is in the dust. Be of those who "enjoin steadfastness and compassion on others. Forgive-"ness and kind speech are better than favours with annoyance. "Judge between men with truth and follow not thy passions,

"lest they cause thee to err from the way of God. Covet not "another's gifts from the Almighty. Touch not the goods "of the orphan. Perform your covenant and walk not proudly "on the earth, and to your wives show affection and "tenderness."

Again and again he repeats: "Show kindness to your "parents, whether one or both of them attain to old age with "thee. Never reproach them; but speak to them both with "respectful speech and tender affection. And to him who "is of kin render his due, and also to the poor and to the "wayfarer. Turn aside evil with that which is better."

And he repeats: "Say, O my servants who have "transgressed to your own injury, despair not of God's "mercy, for all sins doth God forgive. The good word riseth "up to Him, and the righteous deed will He exalt."

Then he proclaims: "Filthy actions are forbidden "whether open or secret, and iniquity and unjust violence."

On future life he speaks thus: "God will not burden "any soul beyond its power. It shall enjoy the good which "it hath acquired, and shall bear the evil for the acquirement "of which it laboured."

Do the preachings of this desert-born Prophet, addressing a larger world and a more advanced humanity, in the nobility of their love, in their strivings and yearnings for the true, the pure, and the holy, fall short of the warnings of any single Teacher who lived before him?

The poor and the orphan, the humble dweller of the earth "with his mouth in the dust," the unfortunate being bereft in early life of parental care, are ever the objects of his tenderest solicitude. Ever and again he announces that the path which leads to God is the helping of the orphan, the relieving of the poor and the ransoming of the captive. His pity and love were not confined to his fellow-beings; the brute creation shared with them his sympathy and tenderness.

According to him, the birds, and the animals, and even vegetable life were all on equal footing in the general scheme of the Universe.

He confined within reasonable limits, considering the social conditions of the times, the unrestrained polygamy practised not only among the Arabs but also among the neighbouring peoples. There was then no means of livelihood for women; no stenography, no typing, no clerical work or employment in shops; no convents or nunneries to serve as refuges for the forlorn. Tribal wars and blood-vengeance, which the Prophet stopped, were decimating men. The pagan Arabs undesignedly maintained a certain equilibrium by burying alive their female children, a practice which was denounced and prohibited by the Prophet in burning terms. Marriage was the only means for women to obtain protection and sustenance. The Prophet gave a qualified permission to the plurality of wives; he subjected it to a condition which practically rendered its toleration in economically-developed communities a nullity.

The Quranic precept lays down: "Marry one, two, three 'or four wives. but if you cannot deal equitably among your 'wives, you shall only marry one." Equity here includes not only maintenance and lodgment but also love and affec-ion.

The condition, therefore, is regarded by the foremost hinkers in Islam as an abrogation of the permission for peoples who have outgrown the social or economic necessities that rendered a qualified practice of plurality of wives permissible. In Islam, as the ***Ashbah*** says, 'Marriage is a sacrament."

The economic condition of the world did not permit of he enfranchisement of bondsmen and bondswomen. Bondage n those days was necessary to prevent the general massacre hat always followed victory. He, therefore, put restraints

on "bondage"; only captives in "lawful" war could be held in bond. But they should be treated with humanity; they should be clothed and fed as the captors, or masters or mistresses; he permitted them to ransom themselves whenever they could.

Whilst, in the Southern States of America, a child born in slavery would never escape being a slave, the Prophet of Islam enjoined that if a captive or bondswoman bore a child to her master, the child would be a free child and the mother would become enfranchised at once.

He proclaimed that constant striving was a necessary condition of man's existence and that unless human beings strove for progress, humanity would soon come to an end He directed his followers to "Acquire knowledge, because "he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of "piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it, "adores God; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; "and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of "devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to "distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the "way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in "solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides "us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends, it serves as an armour "against our enemies. With knowledge, the servant of God "rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, "associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to "the perfection of happiness in the next."

His charity and sympathy were not confined to his own people. He invoked blessings on all humanity.

In an age when the world was steeped in superstition, he sternly condemned witchcraft, sorcery and soothsaying. But he did not direct that the wretched practitioners of the "black arts" or those who pandered to the foolish

delusions of the ignorant, who then, as now, were in every country, should be burnt alive or drowned. In Christendom until recent times the fate that was meted out to the miserable beings suspected of having dealings with the Devil, was atrocious and revolting.

He used the folk-lore current among his people for parables to vitalize their moral consciousness but he never overlooked the demands of Reason. Asked where Satan lived, he replied: "In the heart of man."

His theory of the Cosmos embraced the conception of a plurality of worlds. He did not believe that the earth on which man lived was the sole centre of creation, and always spoke of the Creator as the "Lord of the worlds." In his conception all creation was interlinked. The doctrine of evolution which he preached has been beautifully expressed by one of his greatest followers: "Dying from the inorganic "we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from "the vegetable we rose to the animal. And leaving the "animal we became man. Then what fear that death will "lower us? The next transition will make us angels. From "angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive: "We shall merge in infinity as in the beginning. Have we "not been told, 'All of us will return unto Him'?"

He inculcated strict justice between man and man. Long before Christendom had risen to the true significance of the word, when trial by battle and the ordeal of fire were common, regularly constituted courts determined disputes by proceedings which might compare favourably with the judicial institutions of many countries of modern Europe.

The legal enunciations of Musulman jurists, who would be regarded by the Western world of to-day as untrained or at best theoretical lawyers, would require but little adjustment to bring them into conformity with modern conditions.

on "bondage"; only captives in "lawful" war could be held in bond. But they should be treated with humanity; they should be clothed and fed as the captors, or masters or mistresses; he permitted them to ransom themselves whenever they could.

Whilst, in the Southern States of America, a child born in slavery would never escape being a slave, the Prophet of Islam enjoined that if a captive or bondswoman bore a child to her master, the child would be a free child and the mother would become enfranchised at once.

He proclaimed that constant striving was a necessary condition of man's existence and that unless human beings strove for progress, humanity would soon come to an end He directed his followers to "Acquire knowledge, because "he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of "piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it "adores God; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms; "and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of "devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to "distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the "way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in "solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides "us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as an armour "against our enemies. With knowledge, the servant of God "rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, "associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to "the perfection of happiness in the next."

His charity and sympathy were not confined to his own people. He invoked blessings on all humanity.

In an age when the world was steeped in superstition, he sternly condemned witchcraft, sorcery and soothsaying. But he did not direct that the wretched practitioners of the "black arts" or those who pandered to the foolish

delusions of the ignorant, who then, as now, were in every country, should be burnt alive or drowned. In Christendom until recent times the fate that was meted out to the miserable beings suspected of having dealings with the Devil, was atrocious and revolting.

He used the folk-lore current among his people for parables to vitalize their moral consciousness but he never overlooked the demands of Reason. Asked where Satan lived, he replied: "In the heart of man."

His theory of the Cosmos embraced the conception of a plurality of worlds. He did not believe that the earth on which man lived was the sole centre of creation, and always spoke of the Creator as the "Lord of the worlds." In his conception all creation was interlinked. The doctrine of evolution which he preached has been beautifully expressed by one of his greatest followers: "Dying from the inorganic "we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from "the vegetable we rose to the animal. And leaving the "animal we became man. Then what fear that death will "lower us? The next transition will make us angels. From "angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive: "We shall merge in infinity as in the beginning. Have we "not been told, 'All of us will return unto Him'?"

He inculcated strict justice between man and man. Long before Christendom had risen to the true significance of the word, when trial by battle and the ordeal of fire were common, regularly constituted courts determined disputes by proceedings which might compare favourably with the judicial institutions of many countries of modern Europe.

The legal enunciations of Musulman jurists, who would be regarded by the Western world of to-day as untrained or at best theoretical lawyers, would require but little adjustment to bring them into conformity with modern conditions.

The present stagnation of the Muslim world is due to the misreading of the Master's teachings. The followers of Islam have substituted the letter for the spirit, and are disputing among themselves about non-essential and neglecting the essential.

In the Prophet's system the dignity of labour was extolled; they choose now to regard labour as an unworthy occupation. He preached thrift and the practice of charity, the relief of suffering and distress; they practise instead extravagance, shutting their ears to the cry of distress. He preached the seeking of knowledge "even unto China"; they refuse to receive it even when brought to their door. The Faith is alive but its followers are unable to understand its meaning!

Islam needs only a revival of the Spirit which inspired the Prophet. Christendom is now yearning for reforms in its own churches. The cult of Isis which still lingers in Europe satisfies the longings of certain minds; but the best thinkers want a recognition of the Supreme Intelligence, of a Design in Creation, or the existence of law and order in the Universe. These constitute exactly the doctrines which Islam proclaimed in the 7th century of the Christian Era—not in supersession of what Jesus taught but as a continuation of his efforts to revive spiritual life in the world, which leads to the observance of the rule that the service of man is the most acceptable worship to the Almighty.

MUSLIM EDUCATION*

—MARMADUKE PICKTHALL

THE opposition to modern education which has been raised by the conservatives in every Muslim country, is based on misunderstanding (1) of the nature of Islam itself; (2) of the character of proper Muslim education, and (3) of the nature of modern Western education.

The late Lord Cromer wrote, and his remark is often quoted, that, "If Islam were modernised it would cease to be Islam." He meant that the Islam which he and I and all lovers of the Near East knew in those days—the then existing structure in Islamic countries, including despotism and a host of abuses and anomalies, but including also some heroic qualities which made it dignified and certain true Islamic qualities which made it lovable—would cease to exist if it were modernised. He knew of no other structure of Islam than that old, beautiful, decaying fabric The strange thing is that many Muslims—men brought up on the Qur'ān and the tradition of our Holy Prophet—thought, or behaved as if they thought, as he did. They regarded that half-ruinous social and political fabric as Islam itself, and deemed it impious to seek to renovate it or improve it.

They lived only in remembrance of the past whereas true Islam is the most present of all living things.

تلك امة قد خلت لها ما كسبت و لكم ما كسبتم ولا تسئلون عما كانوا يعملون .

"That is a people which has passed away. Unto them that which they earned and unto you that which

* Being the substance of an address delivered to the Muslims of Malabar.

ye earn. Ye will not be asked concerning that which they did (in their day)."

We shall be asked concerning that which we did in our own day, and sad will be our plight if we did nothing useful.

The revival of Islamic hope and effort which we see today, thank God, in every Muslim land is due to the true vision of Islam as of the present; and that is very largely due to modern education. Only through modern education can a Muslim come to realize the work that Muslims have to do in modern times, the need of the modern world for true Islam, and the wonderful modernity of the holy Qur'ān and of so much of our Prophet's teaching as if it had been meant expressly for the present time.

As for the language of instruction: that was not the choice of Muslims, but a case of urgency. Everyone would rather have conveyed the necessary knowledge in the student's mother tongue. In time that will, no doubt, be done in every country. It is already done in Turkey and in Egypt, and the enlightened Muslim ruler whom I have the privilege to serve, whose care for the education of his people is well known, has inaugurated it in his Dominions by the foundation of the Osmania University where the language of instruction is Urdu and where a staff of learned men is constantly employed in translating into Urdu the best works from other languages. But the need of the Muslims, here as elsewhere, is immediate; the knowledge of the present day is necessary to their welfare and if they were to wait till all that knowledge can be brought to them complete in their own language, the whole Muslim community would be the losers.

Now for the second misunderstanding:—Most Muslims nowadays speak of religious education as something quite apart from education as a whole, as if it meant the teaching of Fiqh (فقه) only. From the proper Muslim standpoint,

all education is alike religious. In a real Muslim State there would be no separate religious institutions. The State itself would be the religious institution. In a real Muslim school there would be no separate "religious" education. The school itself would be the religious education. All the points of Fiqh would be brought out in the course of teaching other subjects. I am thinking of the ordinary High and Middle School. To me it seems certain that a school in which the whole school work, however modern, and the whole school discipline, is run on Muslim lines; where all instruction is given earnestly; where students see their teachers honest and sincere. and careful of religious duties; is infinitely more religious in effect upon the student's mind than one in which separate "religious instruction" is given in a stated number of periods, or which practically confines its instruction to the teaching of Fiqh only.

Islam is the religion of daily life. It includes a man's whole life and it includes a man's whole education. At present it is made to seem something apart from the main stream of life, requiring separate instruction and a different attitude of mind. That is altogether un-Islamic. No such terms as "secular" and "religious' exist in proper Muslim phraseology. The terms in which we have to think are "good" and "evil." We have to bring religion back to daily life and that can be done only by claiming modern education as our own and making it—the whole of it—Islamic.

Now for the misunderstanding concerning the nature of modern education. What would you say of a man who refused to acknowledge his own son merely because that son had grown to manhood since he last beheld him: who used such arguments as these: "My son was small and weak, he had a little voice, and no hair on his face. This creature, on the other hand, is big and strong, he has a deep loud voice and wears a beard. Therefore he is quite a stranger to me." Those Muslims who regard modern scientific education as something altogether foreign to Islam are hardly less

absurd than such a man would be. For this great forward movement is no child of Christendom. Medieval Christendom contained no germ of such a thing. It is the offspring of the old enlightened days of Islam. It was the Muslim scientists who first hit on the inductive method of reasoning, to which this great material advance is mainly due. That method can, indeed, be traced to the Qur'ān itself. It was the contact and example of Islam, it was the teaching of the Muslim Universities, which gave that shock and impetus to Christendom which resulted in the Renaissance and the Reformation; liberating Europe from the bondage of ecclesiasticism and leading to the era of free thought and free inquiry. When seeking to estimate the effect that our holy Prophet's teaching has had upon the world, you must not look at Muslim countries only, you must look at Christendom as well. The Christians are the nearest of mankind to us, as the Qur'ān informs us; there has been action and reaction between the two communities from the beginning of Islam, and some day, please God, they will be one in pure allegiance to Allah.

It is to free thought and not to the religion of the Christian Church that this material advancement of the West is owing. Islam is the religion of free thought. In Islam there is—or ought to be—no priesthood interested to enslave men's minds. The mind of everyone of us has to perform the functions of discrimination and decision which in other religious communities are reserved to a close priesthood. Again and again, in the holy Qur'ān, we are adjured to use the mind which God has given us in order to discriminate in matters of religion and belief, never to trust to mere tradition of the fathers, and never to take others for our Lords besides Allah.

و اذا قيل لهم اتبعوا ما انزل الله قالوا بل نتبع ما الفينا عليه آباءنا
او لو كان آباؤهم لا يعقلون شيئا ولا يهتدون ‏.

"And when it is said unto them: Follow that which Allah hath revealed, they say: we follow that (belief) in which we found our fathers. What even though their fathers were wholly unintelligent and had no guidance."[1]

Human intelligence was hallowed and exalted in Islam. In Christendom it was regarded as an enemy to religion for the simple reason that it questioned, seeking truth, as against dogma; so the priests condemned it. In Europe and America science is in conflict with religion. There is no reason for such conflict in Islamic countries. There was no such conflict in the great days of Islam, when science was pursued as a religious duty. If there is something wrong with science as applied to-day, that is due not to science itself but to the divorce of science from religion. This is a political phenomenon of great interest to us, since it proves the truth of our contention. The use of scientific discoveries, which ought to be of benefit to all mankind, for selfish individual or national gain, for the advantage of one individual or group at the expense of others, or the enslavement or destruction of one nation by another, happens because the people using such inventions have not the Islamic ideal of the progress of mankind as a whole. They have no supreme, religious, thinking head, no Sacred Law of undenied authority. In short they are, in the Qur'ānic phrase, "without guidance" in such matters; which are regarded by them as outside the province of religion. The so-called democratic peoples have lost the very notion of Theocracy, without which real democracy cannot exist. But that does not mean that modern scientific knowledge is itself an evil or ought to be eschewed as such by pious Muslims. On the contrary it is half the Sharī'ah (the Sacred Law); and when they let go that half the Muslims condemned themselves to material decadence as certainly as while they held it they advanced materially.

(1) Sūratu'l-Baqar.

Modern science is simply making use of natural properties and natural laws which always existed in creation, waiting man's discovery. These did not require revelation because man's mind was capable of finding them out by experiment, and the effort of exploring them was good for man's development. But the no less natural, social, ethical and political laws which man could not discover for himself were revealed through the Prophet Muhammad (صلعم). This difference it is which led our Muslim theologians of the decadence wrongly to despise natural science while almost worshipping the other half of the Sharī'ah, or natural laws enjoined in the Qur'ān. We Muslims know all natural laws to be the laws of God ; therefor these modern discoveries are part of God's provision for His creatures.

When the great Napoleon occupied Egypt, the Egyptians became restive under the French yoke. In order to impress them with a sense of the superiority of Europe he summoned all Cairo to the meydān below the citadel, and there, in the presence of that multitude, he sent up a balloon with men in it—a thing never before seen in Egypt. The historian Ahmad al-Jabarti, who was present in the crowd, has recorded its effect on the Egyptians. He heard people saying : "Look at that insignificant little creature"—meaning the great Napoleon, who was much in evidence—"taking all the credit to himself for a thing which he could not do except by the permission of Allah." The Egyptians were quite right. Napolean could never have sent up that balloon if the natural laws, which are the laws of God, had not permitted it. The Viceroyalty of man does not impair the Sovereignty of God. But the Egyptians were quite wrong in their implied contempt for a discovery, which was due to the cultivation of man's faculties, and study of the laws of nature : therefor well within the province which has been assigned to man.

The boundaries of man's province are quite evident in the physical sphere. He has to live and act in strict

obedience to the natural laws or he will perish. He cannot breathe or raise a finger without obeying laws which he never made, nor ever could have made, and which he is powerless to alter by a hair's breadth. But even here he has a field of choice between good and evil, the useful and the harmful. He can, if he will, thrust his hand into the fire. He can husband and control his breath, or simply waste it. It is the same in the spiritual, social, ethical and political spheres in which the boundaries of his field of choice are not self-evident. He must obey the natural laws revealed in the Qur'ān, or he and all his works will perish. His position in the world is made quite clear in the Qur'ān :

و اذ قال ربك للملٰئكة انى جاعل فى الارض خليفة قالوا اتجعل فيها
من يفسد فيها و يسفك الدماء و نحن نسبح بحمدك و نقدس لك قال
انى اعلم ما لا تعلمون .

> "And when thy Lord said unto the angels : Lo ! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said : Wilt Thou place therein one who will do wrong therein and shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee. He said : Surely I know that which ye know not."[2]

And again in the Sūra which is said to have been the first revealed :

كلا ان الانسان ليطغى
ان راٰه استغنى
ان الى ربك الرجعى

"Verily man is rebellious
"That he thinketh himself independent.
"Verily unto thy Lord is the return."[3]

(2) Sūratu'l-Baqar. (3) Sūratu'l-'Alaq.

Man has a high position—that of Allah's viceroy—in the world, and sovereign powers have been entrusted to him in his sphere. But he is not independent. He will have to stand before his Sovereign Lord one day, and render an account of all his works.

He has been given for his province the Earth with all its animals and plants and trees and minerals, its forces hidden and discovered; he has been given charge of his own mind and soul and body, and also of the welfare of his fellow-men.

His duty is not one of devastation or oppression, but of cultivation and improvement. He is entrusted with the power of judgment and free-will: and guidance has been given to him again and again in the world's history. All the Prophets came with the same message of Man's responsibility to God, and human brotherhood. Man's duty of improvement, when fulfilled, leads to فلاح *falāh* (success through full development). Outside the straight path indicated by the Prophets, there may be momentary success of this or that individual or this or that nation at the expense and to the detriment of others, but there can never be success for mankind as a whole, which is the purpose of man's vice-royalty. Those who "deem themselves independent," recognising no higher law than their own interests and no higher will than their own will of the moment, rebel against God's purpose in creation and their success is really failure since it injures others of their kind.

قد افلح من تزکی و ذکر اسم ربه فصلی .

"He is successful who groweth
"And remembereth the name of his Lord, so prayeth."

*

And again:

قد افلح من زکّها و قد خاب من دسّها

"He is indeed successful who maketh it (the human soul) to grow

"And he is indeed a failure who stunteth (and starveth) it."

Cultivation, development, improvement of himself and his surroundings, assisting the development of others : that is the duty of Man as Allah's viceroy in the spiritual, ethical and material spheres, according to the teaching of Islam.

How can that duty be performed by men whose minds are kept in ignorance—men far behind the knowledge of the age in which they live ?

Man is "rebellious" at the present day, for "he thinketh himself independent." He is using all these wonderful discoveries for selfish ends. Islam alone can save him from a great catastrophe. Islam means "submission" or "surrender," leading on to peace, the surrender of the rebel viceroy to his Sovereign Lord leading to peace on earth and human brotherhood ; the surrender of Man's selfish, ever-changing will and purpose to the selfless, never-changing will and purpose of Almighty God. This is religion. Nothing else deserves the name.

ان الدين عند الله الاسلام و ما اختلف الذين اوتوا الكتب الا من
بعد ما جاءهم العلم بغيا بينهم و من يكفر بايات الله فان الله
سريع الحساب .

فان حاجوك فقل اسلمت وجهي لله و من اتبعن و قل للذين اوتوا
الكتب و الامين ء اسلمتم فان اسلموا فقد اهتدوا و ان تولوا فانما
عليك البلاغ و الله بصير بالعباد .

"Verily religion with Allah (consists in) the surrender (to His will and guidance). Those who have received the Scripture differed only after the knowledge came to them, through jealousy among themselves. He who disbelieveth in the revelations of Allah (will find that) verily Allah is swift to take account."

"And if they argue with thee (O Muhammad) say: I have surrendered my purpose to Allah and (so have) those who follow me. And say to those who have received the Scripture and the pagans: Have ye too surrendered? If they have surrendered then truly are they rightly guided. And if they are averse, then it is thy duty only to convey the truth (to them) Allah is a Spectator of His worshippers."[4]

As the sincerity of a man's surrender to the will of Allah can be manifested only in obedience to His Law, Who is the Creator and Provider and Sustainer, not of one race or class of people only, but of all the world, there can be only one test, the same for all mankind; and that test is not mere repetition of the formula of any creed, not the correct performance of any ceremony, not anything that man can do or mutter as a charm, *but conduct*—the conduct of a man's whole life in every detail—man's conduct in relation to his brother man and to himself and to the animals and plants and all the life of earth.

فاليوم لا تظلم نفس شيئا و لا تجزون الا ما كنتم تعملون .

"On that day will no soul be wronged in aught. Ye will be requited only that which ye have done."[5]

This truth is to be found, perhaps, in all religions. But the Muslims are enlisted to bear witness to this truth of man's responsibility to God and of His Law of consequences,

(4) Suratu Ali 'Imrān. (5) Suratu Yā Sin.

and of the necessity of surrender to Allah if the individual would find true happiness or mankind would achieve true success. Most people do not know, or have forgotten, that this, and nothing else, is true religion. The Muslims are a standing army raised to testify to Allah's Sovereignty; to declare to all mankind that He is King of this world just as much as of the others; that the light of this world is His light, that His laws are the natural laws by which we live and move; and so the aim and object of religion is no remote, obscure or supernatural object situated in another world, which some think problematical, but it is here in this world, in the service of our fellowmen.

It is the duty of the Muslims, to endeavour to bring all the world to recognise the fact of Allah's actual Sovereignty which means universal brotherhood and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth. The way has been revealed to them, the laws of God's Kingdom are with them. They have a message of immense importance to mankind, still undelivered How can they deliver it, how can they preach effectually, save by example? And how can they show a bright example to the world, such as the early Muslims by their conduct truly showed, while the majority of so-called Muslims in the world are ignorant, and superstitious, and fanatical?

Fighting is no good for such a purpose and in such a plight as ours: and fighting in itself was never any good for the great central purpose of Islam. It was not the warlike prowess of the early Muslims, but the example of their righteous conduct which converted half the world. To fight in self-defence is lawful; to strive for right, wherever found, against wrong wherever found, by all means in his power, is the duty of a Muslim. But to attack men on account of their religion: that is not allowed. It is the Kingdom of Allah which the Muslims are to strive to establish, not the empire of their own community; and the tolerance of

Islam—which is complete and glorious, as every student of the Holy Qur'ân and of the life of the Holy Prophet knows—a tolerance which embraces all the world—will do more for the achievement of their purpose than would the force of arms, if they possessed it, at the present day.

ان الذين امنوا والذين هادوا والنصارٰى و الصابئين من امن بالله و اليوم الاخر وعمل صالحا فلهم اجرهم عند ربهم و لا خوف عليهم و لا هم يحزنون .

"Verily those who believe, (i.e., the Muslims) and those who keep the Jew's religious law and Christians and Sabaeans—whoever believeth in Allah and the Last Day and doeth right—surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they suffer grief."[6]

And again :

و قالوا لن يدخل الجنة الا من كان هودا او نصارٰى تلك امانيهم قل هاتوا برهانكم ان كنتم صادقين .
بلى من اسلم وجهه لله و هو محسن فله اجره عند ربه و لا خوف عليهم و لا هم يحزنون .

"And they say none entereth Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian. Such are their own desires. Say : Bring your proof (of that which ye assert) if ye are truthful.

"Nay, but whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good (to men) verily his reward is with his Lord ; and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they suffer grief."[7]

(6) Sūratu'l-Baqar. (7) Sūratu'l-Baqar.

Can any other Scripture show such texts as these? The religion of the Qur'ân is not *a* religion but *the* religion of the human race. In order that the world may see it as it is we must get at least upon a par with others in our knowledge and attainments, and we must put forth this great virtue of Islamic tolerance—a tolerance which the rest of the world did not begin even to contemplate till many centuries later, a tolerance which even the West, with all its progress, has not yet attained.

In Islam, even as it is to-day, we can at least show one magnificent achievement, and that is an example of sincere and lasting human brotherhood. In Islam there is no racial or class hatred. Rich and poor, the king, the noble and the labourer, the white, the black, the brown, the yellow peoples mingle in our mosques and schools and palaces upon a footing of complete equality. But the human value of this world-wide brotherhood, the light it carries for mankind at large, is dimmed so long as Muslims lag behind the standard of the world in general education. Therefor I repeat that modern education is, and must be, Muslim education; for nothing else can serve the purpose of Islam so well to-day. We must make it our own for the sake, not of Muslims only, but of everybody.

PERSIAN POETRY AND LIFE IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

—REYNOLD A. NICHOLSON

BY the end of the twelfth century Persia, though paying nominal allegiance to the 'Abbasid Caliphate, had not only asserted her independence in the spheres of religion and politics, but had produced a large and varied literature in which the genius of the race expresses itself unmistakably. Of this literature the best part, in every sense of the phrase, was composed by poets; for while there are many excellent and valuable Persian books written in prose, it remains true that few of these possess the classical quality that has made the names of Firdausi, Sa'di and Hafiz familiar to us. Naturally, both the form and the ideas of the earliest Persian poetry are based, to a great extent, on Arabic models; yet original features are not wanting. The Arabic system of prosody is modified and developed, new metres are introduced, and side by side with the time-honoured *qasida* several new verse:—forms spring up for example, the *rubā'i* (which was chiefly cultivated by minor poets, like Omar Khayyam), the *ghazal*, and the *mathnawi*. While the *qasida* and the *ghazal* are limited in length and conventional in structure, the *mathnawi*, consisting of rhymed couplets and free from all restrictions of size, form and subject-matter, enables the poet to handle the largest themes in any way he may choose. The first great poems of this type are in the field of epic and romance, and, though often imitated, have never been equalled. Firdausi can hold his own anywhere; Nizami whose subtle and difficult style is much admired by Persian critics, does not appeal to European lovers of romance so readily as

Jami, a fifteenth century poet, surpassing him in sweetness and grace but far inferior in power and originality. Meanwhile the art of panegyric had reached its culmination in Anwari, and before the death of Nizami in A.D. 1203 it was becoming clear that henceforth the main stream of Persian poetry would turn away, alike from the historical or legendary past and from superficial pictures of contemporary court life, into wider and deeper channels of human interest. The movement in this direction had been gathering strength for a long time. From the tenth century onwards, such notable poets as Nasir-i-Khusraw, Sana'i of Ghazna, and Nizami's contemporary, Faridu'ddin 'Aṭṭār of Nishapur, not to mention others of less importance, devoted their talents to expounding the religious, philosophical, ethical, and mystical ideas that have enthralled the noblest minds of Persia and have exercised so powerful an influence upon the life and character of her people. It is the case, no doubt, that almost every first class Persian poet is in some degree didactic. In the *Shahnama* we find many passages of moral wisdom, solemn meditations on mortality, and even touches, here and there, of the mystical aspiration which, running as an undersong through the scenes of romantic passion depicted by Nizami, appears without disguise in the second part of the *Iskandarnama*, the last work of the poet who in his earliest *mathnawi*, the *Makhzanu'l-Asrār*, had sought to imbue his readers with the ideals of Sufi asceticism. But while Nizami foreshadows the triumph of ethical and mystical poetry over all its rivals, three of the greatest poets contemporary with him, namely, Anwari, Khaqāni, and Zahir of Faryab, were panegyrists and courtiers. During this period, the late twelfth century, Sufi ethics and mysticism found a voluminous exponent in Farid-u'ddin 'Aṭṭār, but it was only after the Mongol invasion that these ideas became, for the first time, the dominating element in Persian poetry, *Post hoc*, and also *propter hoc*. In nations, as in individuals, intense and prolonged suffering demands an

anodyne. No wonder that Persia, too exhausted to help herself, turned for comfort to those who offered her on the one hand an ideal representation of things all the more prized because they seemed to have vanished from the earth—order, security, justice, beneficence, the social virtues bound up with established custom and tradition and forming the basis of any organised national life; and on the other hand, the mystic's vision of everlasting peace and joy to be attained by the pure in heart who contemplate within themselves the spiritual world that alone is real and enduring.

The flood of ravage let loose by Chingiz and Hulagu was more destructive to poetry than to some branches of learning which on account of their practical utility found favour with the Mongol barbarians. Under the new regime bards of the second and third rank continued to arise, if not to flourish, in Persia itself; but almost all the greater poets of the thirteenth century lived and wrote in foreign lands—Amir Khusraw at Delhi, 'Iraqi at Multan in the Panjab and at Qoniya or Iconium in Asia Minor, while Qoniya was also the adopted home of Jalalu'ddin Rumi. Sa'di of Shiraz who composed the *Bustan* and the *Gulistan* in his native town, is hardly an exception to the rule: for southern Persia escaped the worst fury of the Tartars and, as Browne says, "the life of Shiraz seems to have gone on fairly tranquilly and suffered relatively little disturbance during these stormy days."

Of the poets just mentioned, 'Iraqi, remarkable as he is, stands far below the other three. Moreover, his work both in verse and prose is entirely mystical, and what I have to say about the mysticism of the period will be said in connexion with Jalalu'ddin Rumi and Sa'di. As for Amir Khusraw, who followed in the track of Nizami, I must confess that I have not read his historical romances and therefore cannot judge of their merit. One of these, the tragic love-story of Prince Khiḍrkhan and the Princess Duwalrani, was composed at the request of the hero, who supplied the author

with a narrative written by his own hand. It would be interesting to see whether the style of this poem is any less conventional and the treatment any more realistic than it usually is in Persian romance. I doubt it. If the Prince's love-letters had survived, we should probably find that they were modelled upon the sentiments and the language which Nizami puts into the mouths of his heroes; but it would by no means follow that the sentiments of the royal lover were insincere or that the language in which he expressed them was devoid of spontaneity. Although in some respects Persian literature seems to us to be very artificial and remote from life, it has, in fact, shaped and moulded Persian life in every sphere of thought, feeling and action; and this is preeminently true as regards a subject in which feeling and language are inextricably interwoven with each other. But apart from the fantastic modes of expression peculiar to Persian love-poetry, there are reasons why it does not, as a rule, attract the Western reader; and I purpose to confine myself on this occasion to the didactic poetry of the thirteenth century which is represented by three famous works—each of them supreme masterpieces of their kind—the *Bustan* and *Gulistan* of Sa'di and the *Mathnawi* of Jalalu'ddin Rumi. The two former are delightful epitomes of Persian ethics illustrated by anecdotes and reflections which exhibit the author—if we refrain from looking at him too searchingly—as a wise, witty, accomplished and much-travelled man of the world, a pious Muslim with a somewhat shallow vein of mysticism but a singularly broad and flexible code of morality; while the *Mathnawi* may be described as a vast labyrinth leading those who traverse its profundities into the world of the dervish and giving a wonderful panorama of Persian religious life with all its lights and shadows, its idealism, antinomianism arrogance and humbleness, exaltation and despair, sordid hypocrisy and sublime self-devotion. The two poets have often been contrasted; yet in some ways they are not unlike. To depict Sa'di as the type of worldly wisdom and Jalal-

u'ddin as "the God-intoxicated man," though it may be nearly the whole truth so far as Sa'di is concerned, is only half the truth in regard to Jalalu'ddin. The visionary enthusiast of the odes collected under the name of his preceptor, Shamsu'ddin of Tabriz, was also the founder and head of a great religious order—the Mevlevis; and any one who reads the *Mathnawi* attentively will soon discover that its author was no child in the affairs of this world, that he had an intimate knowledge of human nature, and that he could adapt himself to all sorts and conditions, whether he chose to èxert the powers of his mind in serious conversation or to amuse the company by displaying his talents as a raconteur. What my old teacher, the late Professor Browne, says of Sa'di, that "in his works is matter for every taste, the highest and the lowest, the most refined and the most coarse," is equally applicable to Jalalu'ddin Rumi, though even here we must distinguish Sa'di's catholicity from Rumi's universality. At bottom there is a profound difference in the characters of the two men and in their views of life—a difference which naturally manifests itself in their methods of expression. This is what I want to bring out; and to revert for a moment to the coarseness of certain anecdotes related in the *Gulistan*, the *Bustan* and the *Mathnawi*, it should be observed that these stories are told by Jalalu'ddin in the plainest and crudest language, without any of the frills and trimmings with which Sa'di embellishes them The inculcation of moral and spiritual truth by means of such anecdotes is a curious phenomenon, which I will not discuss now: it suited the taste of the time and required no justification. When tales of this kind were written with the sole object of raising a laugh, some formal apology might be expected, and in the preface to his *Mudhikāt* Sa'di asks pardon of God and excuses himself for having yielded to the pressure put upon him by a noble patron, coolly adding, however, that no gentleman will blame him, since "a joke in speech is like salt is food." Jalalu'ddin, who always sees the soul of goodness in things

evil, draws into his net all the facts of experience, and seeks to unify them. Some of them are ugly, and he paints them naked, just as they are. Sa'di's elegantly draped figures may be more presentable in polite society, but they are infinitely more offensive.

The use of concrete images for the conveyance of abstract ideas is one of the most obvious characteristics of Persian poetry. Too often the idea merely serves as a prop for ingenious, far-fetched, and hyperbolical imagery, which overgrows it in such luxuriance that the reader is apt to be sickened. In this respect, as in others, Sa'di keeps the safe middle course. With him, the image generally accompanies the idea or at least remains separable from it: the idea has not been so closely and intensely fused with its external form at the moment of conception that the two appear as one; and here the inferiority of Sa'di's poetic genius to that of Jalalu'ddin Rumi betrays itself For example, the maxim that an evil nature cannot be eradicated by education is expressed in the *Gulistan* in the following lines:

> "Good men to an ill race
> No grace reflected give:
> Like water in a sieve
> Is virtue in the base."

And again:

> "Never will flawed steel make a tempered brand,
> The rogue instructed must a rogue remain.
> Lilies the gentle purity of rain
> Breeds in the garden, burns in brackish sand."

The tyrant is in danger from those whom he has inspired with fear of him, even if they be weak.

> "Dread him who dreads thee—aye, albeit not much
> Ado thou'dst make to fight a hundred such.
> See how the cat in desperation flies,
> A clawing Fury, at the panther's eyes.
> The viper, darting, wounds the boy in dread
> That he will lift a stone and crush its head."

Sa'di excels in this species of illustration. In description, when no moral idea is involved, he is less happy. "I have heard," he says in the *Bustan*, "that Hatim of Tayy had an Arab horse," and he proceeds to describe it.

> "Fleet as the zephyr was this sable steed ;
> Thunder his snort ; no lightnings match his speed.
> He gallops : o'er hill and plain the pebbles fly,
> As 'twere an April hail-cloud passing by."

Or take the lines in which, after having described the miserable night he spent amongst the idolaters at Somnath, he depicts the sudden rise of dawn :

> "Night, as a black-robed preacher risen to pray,
> From willing scabbard drew the sword of Day ;
> The fire of Morning fell on cindery Night,
> And in a moment all the world was bright."

This is clever, but compare it with the verse of Jalal-u'ddin Rumi :

> "The promised hour arrived, and day broke, and the sun, rising from the East, began to burn the stars."

Here we have a single image, which in Persian is contained in a single epithet—*akhtar-suz*, "star-burning." A few lines further on, we read :

> "The king himself, instead of the chamberlains, went forward to meet his guest from the Invisible.
> Both were seamen who had learned to swim,
> the souls of both were knit together without sewing."

The idea is that their spiritual affinity was founded on the union of their souls in the state of pre-existence when, before the bodies had been created, the souls were, so to speak, swimming in the ocean of God's consciousness.

> "The king opened his hands and clasped him to his breast and received him, like love, into his heart and soul."

"Like love": what could be more expressive than these two words? Sa'di never writes like that, for between him and Jalalu'ddin there is all the difference between intellectual and imaginative poetry. On the whole, however, Persian poetry is intellectual and fanciful rather than imaginative, and Oriental critics award the highest praise to the poet who delights them by the invention and combination of subtle ideas, or who creates the most original and perfect forms for ideas that may have been expressed less admirably by hundreds before him. Here Sa'di, as his countrymen would put it, "carries off the ball" from Jalalu'ddin He is the finer artist. What he says is often commonplace enough, but he possesses the Horatian gift of saying it in the best way—neatly, tersely and with unfailing urbanity. No other Persian poet has a style so classical. Moreover, he dwells very near the centre of Persian life and thought, and owing to his literary genius his works have become the standard of popular morality. The standard is perhaps as respectable as ideals based on good sense and enlightened self-interest are likely to be There is nothing heroic about Sa'di, he was no saint, and some traits in him remind us of Haji Baba. but he was thoroughly human. We can forgive a good deal to the man who wrote:

"Men are but limbs of one vast frame,
Their seed original the same.
Suffering in one limb manifest
Diseases each and all the rest.
Unmoved by other's woe, you can
Deserve no more the name of man."

Since his teaching is always directed to a practical end, he warns the inhuman oppressor that his crime will be followed by punishment in this world and the next.

" 'Tis sin to grasp with giant arm and twist
A child's weak fingers in a brawny fist.
Well may the ruthless fear, themselves low laid,
That none will stretch a pitying hand to aid."

If not here, then hereafter:

"Thine ears are stopped against thy people's cries
With cotton—pluck it out! Be just, be wise,
Judge as thou shalt be judged the Day of God's assize."

It is easy to pick holes in Sa'di's character. He pays more regard to expediency than to truth, and in relating his adventures of travel he seems to have acted upon his own maxim—"The man who has seen the world tells many lies."

If his attitude towards friends is cynical and towards enemies ferocious, we must remember that the times in which he lived were steeped in treachery and cruelty. And though he lacks the spirit of love and faith which, in the beautiful words of Jalalu'ddin Rumi, "makes kindnesses grow out of the causes of hatred," his ethic does on occasions approach that level. "Enemies," he says, "can be disarmed by gentleness: severity turns a friend into a foe." "The virtuous man's rule of life is this: to suffer injury and show kindness." If mysticism were only a matter of words, no one could deny Sa'di's right to be included among the elect. In his youth he studied Sufism at Baghdad under the celebrated Shaykh Shihabu'ddin Suhrawardi and composed a large number of odes in which the fashionable ideas of mystical love-poetry are mixed up with moral reflections and even with compliments to his patrons, while much of his later ethical teaching is derived from Sufi literature. The Odes are exceedingly graceful, and the Third Book of the *Bustan*, where Sa'di discourses on mystic love, contains some exquisite passages, such as the well-known allegory of the Moth and the Candle. Yet they do not ring true. Their formal perfection cannot disguise—rather, it forces into sharper relief—the absence of what is essential. We miss the glow of inward feeling; the picture is dead, it has no soul. Those familiar with the writings of genuine mystics will not be deceived by Sa'di's brilliant imitations; but I may mention that in one of his minor works he tries to amuse his readers by parodying a mystical treatise

written by himself.[1] Perhaps the less said about his sincerity, the better. In order to appreciate him fully, we must detach ourselves, so far as we can, from the moral judgment which pronounces much of his poetry to be insincere, and also from the æsthetic judgment (prevalent in Europe since the beginning of the 19th century), which condemns it for its intellectual moderation and cold reasonableness. The qualities that render Sa'di the most popular and, within his limits, the most admirable of Persian poets would readily have obtained recognition in the age of Dryden, Pope and Addison. Although Sa'di outlived Jalalu'ddin Rumi, he wrote the *Bustan* and the *Gulistan* about twenty years before A.D. 1273, when Jalalu'ddin passed away, leaving his *Mathnawi* unfinished. The infinite riches of the *Mathnawi* are not contained in a little room, and it would be ridiculous to attempt any description of them here. I will conclude this paper with some remarks on Jalalu'ddin regarded as a poet. At the same time, since his mysticism is related to his poetry as the spirit to the form, no separation of the one from the other is really possible While Sa'di, for the most part, deals with the relation of the individual to society, Jalalu'ddin makes all depend upon his relation to God. He teaches that man in his essential nature is one with God, and that this unity is realised through love, and through the knowledge which love brings. Jalalu'ddin writes from the standpoint of the perfect man who has attained Truth, and who feels, acts, and speaks in harmony with the Truth. Whatever view we may take of emotional mysticism, its effects upon the mystics themselves are beyond dispute. The sense of being in immediate contact with the Divine has left its mark on Persian life and literature. It rises to astonishing heights in the Odes which Jalalu'ddin consecrated to the memory of Shams-i-Tabriz; the *Mathnawi*, a didactic work addressed to Sufis, generally moves on a lower plane; but though the poet often wanders far from the

1. The reference is given by Professor H.H. Schaeder in *Islam*, Vol. xiv, p. 189.

fountain-head of his inspiration, he never loses it altogether, and even in the dullest passages it makes its presence felt, if only by the free and unconventional language in which he clothes his ideas. As he stands closer than Sa'di to the heart of things, his representations of the external world assume a deeper significance. Whereas Sa'di touches incidentally upon many details of Persian life, which may or may not illustrate his theme, but in any case are so handled as to furnish an artistic setting for it, Jalalu'ddin sees in life and nature nothing but symbols of that Reality which it is the whole object of his art to reveal; hence *his* pictures of life and nature are introduced not for art's sake but for truth's sake, and his manner of drawing them is correspondingly direct. The following passage illustrates the difficulty of seeing one's own faults and the need of seeking a spiritual physician who can diagnose them and apply the proper remedy

"When a thorn darts into any one's foot, he sets his foot upon his knee,

And keeps searching for its head with the point of a needle, and if he does not find it, he keeps moistening the place with his lip.

A thorn in the foot is so hard to find: how is it then with a thorn in the heart? Answer that!

Somebody sticks a thorn under a donkey's tail; the donkey does not know how to get rid of it: he starts jumping.

He jumps, and the thorn only strikes deeper: it needs an intelligent person to extract a thorn.

In order to get rid of the thorn, the donkey from irritation and pain went on kicking and dealing blows in a hundred places;

But that thorn-removing physician was an expert: putting his hand on one spot after another, he tested it—"

and the narrative proceeds to set forth how the physician, who was a wise and holy man, discovered that his patient, the king's handmaiden, was in love with a goldsmith of Samarcand, and how he cured her by giving her in marriage to the goldsmith, whom he afterwards caused to be put to death. The whole allegory may be read in the First Book of the *Mathnawi*.

Equally plain, direct and lifelike is the poet's description, in the Third Book, of a scene which, perhaps, he had actually witnessed. He describes it in connexion with the subject of temptation and tribulation : *quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*.

> "The mountain-goat runs up the high mountain, unharmed, for the purpose of getting some food.
>
> Whilst he is browsing, suddenly he sees a trick played by the ordinance of Heaven.
>
> He casts his gaze upon another mountain : on that other mountain is a she-goat.
>
> Straightaway his eye is darkened : he leaps madly from this mountain to that.
>
> To him it seems so near, and as easy as running round the sink in the court of a house.
>
> Those thousands of ells are made to appear to him as two ells, in order that from mad infatuation the impulse to leap may come to him.
>
> As soon as he leaps, he falls midway between the two pitiless mountains
>
> He had fled to the mountain to escape from the hunters : his very refuge shed his blood.
>
> The hunters are seated between the two mountains in expectation of this awesome decree of God."

Let the reader compare that with any description of life or nature in Sa'di, and ask himself whether the greatest

literary skill can compensate for lack of true poetic feeling and imagination.

Here are a few more pictures taken at random from the *Mathnawi:*

A druggist's shop:

"Look at the trays in front of a druggist—each kind put beside its own kind,

Things of each sort mixed with things of the same sort, and a certain elegance produced by this homogeneity.

If his aloes-wood and sugar get mixed, he picks them out from each other, piece by piece."

Just so, when the world was created,

"The trays were broken and the souls were spilled: good and evil ones were mingled with each other.

God sent the prophets with Scriptures, to pick out and sort the grains on the dish"

Dancing dervishes:

"They ate the viands and began the mystic dance: the monastery was filled with smoke and dust up to the roof—

Smoke of the kitchen, dust raised by the beating of feet, tumult of soul caused by longing and ecstasy.

Now, waving their hands, they beat the ground with their feet; now, prostrate in prayer, they swept the floor with their foreheads"

The harvest season:

"At winnowing-time—is it not so?—the labourers on the threshing-floor beseech God for wind,

So that the grain may be parted from the chaff and go into a barn or be stored in pits.

When the blowing wind is long delayed, you may see them all turning to God with humble entreaty."

Jalalu'ddin's powers as a poet are shown to the best advantage in lofty and sustained flights of imagination. Many such occur in the *Mathnawi*, but they are too long to be quoted here. I must confine myself to a few brief extracts, which seem to me characteristic.

On moral responsibility:

> "Although the wall casts a long shadow, yet at last the shadow turns back again towards it.
>
> The world is the mountain, and our action the shout; the echo of the shouts comes back to us."

On love:

> "Whether love be from this side or from that, in the end it leads us yonder."

On friendship:

> "A friend is like gold, tribulation like fire; the pure gold is glad in the heart of the fire."

On truth and falsehood:

> "Words and names are like pitfalls: the sweet flattering word is the sand that sucks up the water of our life.
>
> The one sand whence water gushes is seldom to be found: go, seek it!"

The next two passages—the last I shall quote—have parallels in the works of two great English poets of the 19th century.

> "Let us implore God to help us to discipline: he that lacks discipline is deprived of the grace of the Lord.
>
> Through discipline this heaven has been filled with light, and through discipline the angels became immaculate and holy."

So Wordsworth in his Ode to Duty:

> "Stern Lawgiver!—
>
> Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;

And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong."

The thought expressed by Shelley—

"Dust to the dust; but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came."

In Jalalu'ddin

"That which is of the sea is going to the sea: It is going to the same place whence it came—

From the mountain-top the swift-rushing torrents, and from our body the spirit whose motion is mingled with love."

These are not mere coincidences; Jalalu'ddin has certain affinities to Wordsworth and much in common with Shelley: If Sa'di's outlook is wholly medieval, that cannot be said of the poet who describes woman as "a ray of God" and anticipates the lesson of Goethe's *Faust* in a memorable line—

"From Satan logic, and from Adam love."

Jalalu'ddin has been called the Dante of Persia. The comparison, though imperfect, explains itself if we regard the *Mathnawi* as reflecting, through all its variety of fact and fable, those universal principles and eternal realities which the poet's eye discerns beneath the forms and outward circumstances of his own age.

ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE AND THE NECESSITY FOR REFORMS

—AMEER ALI

A Pathetic and, for us, quite tragic interest attaches to the following short article, as most probably the last literary effort of a great Muslim writer, whose name was known in every part of the civilised world. The late Mr. Syed Ameer Ali's published works in faultless English did much to remove the misconception of Islam and prejudice against Muslims which formerly prevailed in every Western country ; and in a narrower but even more important sphere his dignified and gracious personality, and wide benevolence, upheld the honour of Islam as probably no other Muslim of the British Empire has upheld it. His death is a loss to the whole Islamic World but especially a loss to us in India. We offer our sincere condolence to Mrs. Ameer Ali and her sons in their bereavement

THE principle of development was embodied in the law : and legal interpretation was regulated by the necessities of the time (*maslihat-u'l-waqt*).

The difference in the status of women under the English common law and the laws of Islam, is worthy of note In England until some fifty or sixty years ago a married woman could possess no property and exercise no control over her earnings. Married or maiden she had no civil rights ; she could not sue in her own name , her *couverture* was a feudal bondage in disguise In Islam a woman possessed and exercised all the rights which a man did. She was even entitled to hold judicial offices.

The Arabs in the time of the Prophet were either governed by long existing customs or by rules they had adopted from the Jews who were settled in their midst. Any attempt to make a complete sweep of the customs that were in force among the people of Arabia would have been an economic calamity. The Prophet, therefore, left to the growth of spiritual and moral consciousness the evolution of the social rules in accord with the times. Thus many archaic customs and old rabbinical prescriptions were tacitly allowed, though opposed to the spirit of the new Dispensation. To them I will refer later.

The first school of Muhammadan Law was established about the middle of the seventh century of the Christian era, by the apostolical Imām Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq who lectured at Medina from a philosophical standpoint, on the rules and principles of the Muslim Law.

Abū Ḥanīfah, the founder of the first distinctive Sunni school of interpretation, was a pupil of the Imām, and the liberalism of his views was in conformity with the enunciations of the Medinite school. His followers are called *Ahl-ur-rai-wal-kayas* ("people of ratiocination.")

Abū Ḥanīfah was followed by three other legists, Shâfa'ī, Malik and Ibn Hanbal. Their schools are decidedly more archaic.

Abū Ḥanīfah's two disciples, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad, were distinguished lawyers who have left their mark on the pages of Islamic history. Abū Yūsuf was the chief *Qaḍi* of Baghdad under the Caliph Hārūn-ar-Rashīd. His work called the *Kitāb-u'l-Kharaj* forms a valuable asset in the annals of Islamic jurisprudence.

The development of Muslim law moved along two lines. The text-writers wrote and commented on the precepts of the Prophet from the theoretical point of view. The law was

discussed in a spirit which appeared to them as most consistent with the requirements of the people, and the necessities of the times.

On the other hand the *muftis* (jurisconsults) delivered their dicta (*fatāwā*) which were accepted as rules for the decision of the particular cases arising between the parties, or requiring decision by the *qadis*. These dicta became precedents for the guidance of their successors.

The exposition of jurists commenced almost at the same time as the first text-book—about the tenth century of the Christian era

Thus the law continued to grow until we come to the eighteenth century. Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr, who ruled over India towards the end of the seventeenth century, desirous of having a digest of the whole Islamic jurisprudence, confided the task to a body of jurists distinguished for their learning and knowledge of the law. He in fact did exactly what Napoleon accomplished for France and Europe in general in later times. The digest compiled by these jurists is called after the Emperor, the *Fatāwā'i 'Ālamgiri*.

In India this is the standard work on the principles of the Sunni law and occupies the same position as the *Mabsut* in the Shi'ah world.

Besides the *Fatāwā'i Alamgiri*, other digests were promulgated from time to time. The *Fatāwā'i Qāḍi-Khan* was compiled in the eleventh century. These *Fatāwā* illustrate progressive advance in the juridical conception and social conditions

The Mohammedan jurists were not unaware of the rule of *ex abundante cautela* (*mazid-ul-iḥtiāt*) as many of their enunciations testify. The sacredness of the marriage-tie is thus described by the *al-Ashbāh wan-Nazā'ir* compiled in the thirteenth century of the Christian era:

"Marriage" it says, "is an institution ordained for the protection of society, and in order that human beings may guard themselves from foulness and unchastity. Marriage when treated as a contract is a permanent relationship based on mutual consent on the part of a man and a woman between whom there is no bar to a lawful union."

Having regard to the sacredness of the marriage contract, the facility permitted to dissolve the union may seem strange. To understand the anomaly it is necessary to take a brief survey of the condition that existed in most countries when the Prophet of Islam commenced his reforms.

Among all the nations of antiquity the power of divorce was regarded as a natural corollary to the marital right. Originally, this power was exclusively vested in the husband, and the wife was under no circumstances entitled to claim a divorce The progress of civilisation and the advance of ideas led to a partial amelioration in the status of women. They, too, acquired a qualified right to dissolve the marriage tie.

Under the old rabbinical law a husband could divorce his wife for any cause which made her distasteful to him. Among the Athenians as well as the early Romans, the husband's right to repudiate the wife was as unrestricted as among the Israelites

In later times, among the Hebrews, the Shammaites to some extent modified the custom of divorce by imposing certain restrictions on its exercise, but the school of Hillel upheld the law in its primitive strictness.

At the time of the Prophet's preachings, the Hillelite doctrines were chiefly in force among the Jewish tribes of Arabia, and repudiations by the husbands were as common among them as among the pagan Arabs. His rules marked a

new departure in the history of Eastern legislation. He restricted the power of divorce possessed by the husbands; he gave to the women the right of obtaining a separation on reasonable grounds; and towards the end of his life he went so far as practically to forbid its exercise by the men without the intervention of "arbiters" or a judge. He pronounced a divorce to be the most detestable before God of "all permitted things, for it prevented conjugal happiness and interfered with the proper upbringing of children." The permission, therefore, though it gave a certain countenance to the old customs, has to be read with the light of the lawgiver's own words.

Great divergence, therefore, exists among the various schools regarding the exercise of the power of divorce by the husband of his own motion and without the intervention of the judge. A large and influential body of jurists regard *ṭalāq* emanating from the husband as prohibited except for necessity, such as the adultery of the wife. Another section, consisting chiefly of the Mu'tazilites, consider *ṭalāq* as not permissible without the sanction of the *Hakim-ush-Shara'*, viz., the Judge administering the Muslim law. They consider that any such cause as may justify separation and remove *ṭalāq* from the category of being "forbidden" *(mamnū')* should be tested by an unbiassed judge; and, in support of their doctrine, they refer to the words of the Prophet already cited, and his direction that in case of dispute between the married parties "arbiters" should be appointed for the settlement of their differences.

The Hanafīs, the Mālikīs, the Shāfi'īs and the bulk of the Shī'ahs hold *ṭalāq* to be permitted *(mubāḥ)*, though they regard the exercise of the power without any cause to be morally or religiously abominable.

The ***Radd-ul-Muḥtār*** after stating the argument against the proposition that *ṭalāq* is unlawful, proceeds to say:

"No doubt, it is forbidden, but it becomes *mub*ā*ḥ* (permissible) for certain outside reasons and this is th meaning of those jurists who hold that it is really fo bidden. And its being *mubāḥ* arises from the necessi of release (from the marital tie) in certain case Therefore, when there is no reason whatsoever, the is no necessity for release; and if *ṭalāq* is given witho any reason, that is ingratitude to God, and the givi of unnecessary and gratuitous trouble to the wom and to the children.........If there is no legal cause f *talāq* such as would render it *mubāḥ*, then it must l considered unlawful."

The author of the *Multaqa* (Ibrāhīm Halebi) is mo concise. He says:

"The law gives to the man primarily the faculty dissolving the marriage, if the wife by her indocility her bad character renders the married life unhapp but in the absence of serious reasons, no Musulman ca justify a divorce either in the eyes of religion or tl law. If he abandon the wife or put her away fro simple caprice, he draws upon himself the divine ange for the 'curse of God' said the Prophet, 'rests upon hi who repudiates his wife capriciously'...............*Ṭalāq* permitted only when the wife by her conduct injur the husband.........and it is *wājib* (obligatory) when tl husband cannot fulfil his duties, as when he is impoter or an eunuch."

In the second century of the Hijra, under the Ommeyad an irregular form of divorce was introduced in the Islam system, which recognised none of the checks imposed by tl Lawgiver. The Shī'āhs and the Mālikīs hold irregular divorc (the *ṭalāq-u'l-bida't)* to be unlawful whilst the Hanafīs an the Shāfi'is agree in holding it to be effective although i its commission the man incurs a sin.

Pre-Islamic institutions insisted on no formula for severing the marriage-tie, and as there was no check on the irresponsible powers of the husband, a simple intimation from him to the effect that the marriage was dissolved was sufficient. In Islam, even among the schools which recognise the validity of a divorce without the intervention of judicial authority, there are several conditions for the exercise of the power by the husband. The object of these conditions is to project the wife from being cast off at the mere caprice of the husband. They also give to the woman the right to obtain a dissolution of the contract under certain circumstances. The formula which is most approved gives to the husband a respite to realise the effects of his conduct and for the appointment of "arbiters" to intervene in conjugal quarrels.

Another important point requiring earnest consideration is the question of dower which is customary in Muslim marriages. In India, among affluent families, the settlement in favour of the wife is never in accord with the means of the husband or the position of the wife; it is usually fixed on a fancy basis and is called *Mahr-ta'jil*. It is often fixed for what is called "glorification." In Oudh the Courts, under Section V of the Oudh Laws Act (XVIII of 1876), have the power of reducing the amount of dower. This section declares that:

> "Where the amount of dower stipulated in any contract of marriage by a Mohammedan is excessive with reference to the means of the husband, the entire sum provided in the contract shall not be awarded in any suit by decree in favour of the plaintiff, or by allowing it by way of set-off, lien or otherwise to the defendant; but the amount of the dower to be allowed by the Court shall be reasonable with reference to the means of the husband and the *status* of the wife."

And this rule is applicable whether the suit to enforce the contract is brought in the husband's lifetime or after his death. As the widow has a lien on the property of her husband, for her dower, the question has often arisen to what extent she is entitled to obtain possession of the property of her husband in lieu of her claim. Great injustice is often done to the children if the whole property is made over to the widow for the satisfaction of the dower, and the children are left paupers.

In other parts of India, however, the Courts have no such power ; and in cases of dispute award the whole dower to the wife. If she is the second wife, the entire settlement comes to her and reduces to poverty the children of the first marriage. It is a scandalous perversion of the law and leads to the pauperisation of the community. I recommend strongly that the Muslim community ought to apply to the legislature for the extension of the Dower Act of Oudh to the whole of India.

Legitimacy under the Islamic Law, as under the English Law, follows, as it is called, "the bed." Every child born during the subsistence of the marriage is considered legitimate. Muhammadan Law recognises three kinds of union ; one is called a valid marriage ; the second is called an invalid marriage, and the third is a void marriage.

For example, if a man purports to marry a woman within the prohibited degree, whether it is by mistake or otherwise, the marriage is absolutely null and void and the children are illegitimate.

In the case of an invalid marriage the position is different. In a union between two persons of opposite sexes between whom there is no bar to a contract of marriage, if the marriage is in fact contracted, it is only *invalid*. For example, if a man married a woman who worships idols, the marriage is *invalid* because she may at any time adopt Islam,

or Judaism or Christianity, which are "Scriptural" religions. The same rule applies to a marriage of a man to two sisters simultaneously or one after the other in the lifetime of the first. Marriage with a second sister is not permitted in Islam but it can be legitimated by the death or divorce of the first sister. In all these cases the children are absolutely legitimate. The Musulman Law does not visit the sins or mistakes of the parents on the children.

The High Court of Calcutta under a misapprehension of the Musulman Law has pronounced a marriage with two sisters whilst both are living as "void" as a marriage with a mother-in-law or daughter-in-law. This is wholly wrong and ought to be set right either by judicial declaration or by a legislative enactment.

I will give one more instance of the mistakes that frequently occur in judicial expositions in India. A section of the Shī'ahs recognise the validity of temporary unions, in the same way as has become common in the West. In temporary marriages, called *Muta'h*, the Shī'ah Law does not allow the power of divorce to the husband. There are certain other restrictions which it is not necessary to specify. But the Shī'ah legists of the Akhbari School have had recourse to a device for the purpose of throwing off the shackles which the earlier jurists had imposed upon the power of a husband. It is said by them that, as a creditor can release the debtor without his consent from the obligation of paying the debt, the husband, being a creditor, can release the wife from the marriage contract. This is combated by the earlier jurists. The celebrated author of the *Mabsut* and other great expounders of the Shī'ah Law, even the chief Mujtahid of Teheran, have pronounced that the consent of the wife is essential to the validity of a release (*ahwal qabul zaujeh*). The contrary view was actually adopted by the High Court of Calcutta in the case of *Kamar Kadar v Ludden Sahiba.*[1] One

(1) (1886) I.L. 14 Cal. 276.

would have thought that, having regard to the difference of opinion among the Shi'ah lawyers, a British Court of Justice would adopt the view most conformable to "justice, equity and good conscience." The doctrine of the *Sharh-ul-Luma*, however, has received judicial recognition in the above case. The facts were as follows:—the plaintiff married the defendant, a young unmarried woman of respectable parentage, by the *muta'h* form for a period of fifty years. A few weeks after the marriage he abandoned her and, on her suing for maintenance, alleged that he had married her for two months and a half only This was found to be untrue, and he was ordered, under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, to pay the maintenance. He then brought a suit to have it declared that the marriage relationship had been dissolved by his "giving up the term" and that, consequently, he was not bound to maintain the wife. There was no allegation of infidelity or misconduct against her. The defendant pleaded that under the law of her sect, the husband could not dissolve the union, as alleged by him, of his own motion, and that even if he could do so he was not absolved from his liability to maintain her under the contract of marriage. After a varied fortune the case came up to the High Court of Calcutta, and the learned Judges there held that the *Mabsut was an old work and could not possibly have been known to the parties, but that the Sharaye-ul-Islam was a later work and better known in India; and, therefore, more binding*! And they accordingly held, with the aid of the gloss of the *Sharh-ul-Luma*, that the husband, though he has no power of divorce, may still divorce his wife by giving up the term! *They did not decide the other question raised by the defendant, that the husband was not absolved from his liability to maintain her by virtue of the agreement entered into at the time of marriage.*

It seems to me that the time has arrived for the Musulmans of India to move the Legislatures for the enactment of

a rule that marriages should be dissolved only when a Court of Justice especially empowered to deal with matrimonial disputes is of opinion that there are adequate reasons for dissolving the tie.

TOWARDS A RESURRECTION OF THOUGHT

—M. Asad-Weiss

THE MARCH of the human race is marked by the growth and decay of cultures. All along the many endless ways that stretch backwards into the mists of an unknown past we can see those immensely complicated expressions of the human genius which never grow tired of shaping and reshaping the flood of life. We can see them alive, passing through many forms and degrees of intensity, and we can see them, as a memory, when they have ceased to be · but we cannot clearly perceive how they *die*. For the disintegration of cultures is never synonymous with the end of their life. Before they pass away they transmit something of their vital currents to new formations, and thus perpetuate themselves in the chain of their progeny. As no culture is devoid of ancestry, so also every vigorous culture, dead or alive, is everlastingly ramified throughout the whole landscape of human life: Individual organic beings, plants or animals or men, always reach a certain moment where we can say (it may be without being fully justified, but anyhow we have the courage of decision to say so) that here and now—notwithstanding the possibility of superindividual continuity—the individual life has ceased. With such complex phenomena as cultures, however, a definition of their moment of death is not possible even if we adapt our conceptions to the colossal scale of race-life: just as we cannot exactly define the borderline between air and vacuum in the stratosphere. The most we can perceive is the gradual weakening of the life-force in a culture, and a gradual dissolution of its contours: but simultaneously with it, or even anterior to it, we see some of its elements, perhaps changed in outward

form, reappear in another culture. The same, in a reverse sense, applies to the "birth" of almost all cultures. They slowly emerge out of dimness and grow into the clearness of a distinct outline: we see their youth, but cannot define the moment of their birth.

But there is one exception. Of all known cultures there is only one—an exception almost staggering in its uniqueness—which permits us to establish the time of its birth to within one or two decades: the culture of Islam. Whereas all other cultures by degrees evolve out of a conglomerate of many influences, and only haltingly assume a shape of their own, this one sprang in a single moment into full-fledged existence; it was there, suddenly and all at once, clearly outlined and possessed of definite features. This does not mean that Islamic culture had no relation with the past; such an assertion would amount to the preposterous claim that it was without ancestry. On the contrary, the idea underlying all its expressions and again and again reiterated by the prophetic personality to whom it owes its existence is the conception of cultural and spiritual *continuity* in the life of mankind. Nobody denies that the religion of Islam contains much that was already in evidence in previous religious teachings. But the culture it so abruptly generated possessed those older influences at the very moment of its birth, and did not assimilate them slowly during an evolutionary process. It began in all the fullness of its form. Whatever moulding it underwent in its later periods can be likened to the phases of development through which a human being goes; and as the child has already got its distinct personality at the moment it leaves the womb of its mother, so Islamic culture had all its characteristics at the very time of its beginning: that is, it had a clearly *marked* beginning. And that is more than can be said of any other culture Who can know the exact beginning of European culture? What we see of it has slowly evolved out of the civilization of the Romans and oriental Christianity adapted to occidental needs; and from

the Romans the trail goes further back, to the Greeks, and through them to the Phrygians—again towards the East—and to the hazy forms of Crete and Mycenæ, and thence to Egypt. Where is there a threshold between an ending Old and a beginning New? And so it is with the Hindu culture with its Aryan shadows stretching northwards beyond the Pamirs and backwards beyond the count of time; and with the culture of China: and with the legendary beginnings of its offshoot, Japan; and with Sumeria and Babylonia; and with all others Only in the great religious formations, Christianity and Buddhism is there something like a discernible beginning which coincides with the life of their Founders. But even apart from the fact that the personalities of Buddha and Christ are not clearly apparent to the historical eye, the religions they generated cannot be described as cultures. They, no doubt, greatly influenced cultures, and were themselves influenced by their surroundings—different in each country and period—but they never embraced the life of human groupings in its entirety, they never produced a society deriving its momentum and its shape from them only, or even predominantly from them. They were but great and important spiritual movements, not cultures. It is in early Islam, and in Islam alone, that we find a perfect blend of religion and culture: a culture with a clearly discernible beginning.

The possibility of determining the exact beginning of a culture is of considerable, and not only theoretical, importance to the student of history. It enables us to view this culture in its pristine nakedness, still free from later, extraneous influences, and so to realize its individual structure and the dynamic reality that henceforth are to dominate its development above and beneath all accidental changes due to contact with other form-giving forces: in short, it enables us to recognize the *direction of its will.* And if we analyze the latter we find another fundamental difference between the Islamic and all other cultures. All of them, without a single

exception, were produced by geographical or racial necessities They represent the development of racial genius, and their innermost import lies in the self-realization of a particular race or people determined by geographical space. They might be likened to a tree which grows upwards from its roots, draws sap from the earth and air from the air, branches out according to the intangible rules of its own vitality and the quality of the soil: and you never can say what direction the branches will take, and how far the growth will go Islamic culture, however, is not organic in this sense: it is essentially the instrument of an *idea*, that is, a postulate and a programme. The unfulfilled endeavour of every religion, to make an idea the starting point of a new human development, to find a common cultural denominator of human striving beyond the accidents of geographical location or tribal grouping, has found its realization in Islam alone. Whereas Buddhism and Christianity failed in becoming cultures and became cults instead, Islam succeeded, because it did not content itself with defining the relations between man and the Unseen but boldly stepped into the sphere of practical life and its everyday problems, of bread and sexual relations, of politics and trade and finance—and thus removed the barriers between Caesar's and God's domains It preached the value not only of the Hereafter but also of life in this world in all its manifestations, spiritual and material (and in the ethological structure of Islam there is no inherent conflict between both). It formulated its law in such a way that everything that helps life, widens its scope or makes it more secure is regarded as moral, and everything that injures life, diminishes its value or security, as immoral. The goal is, of course, not absolute security of individual life, because this is obviously impossible—but the greatest possible security for the greatest possible number of human beings; and the life of the many has always preference over the life of few.

It cannot be said that, with regard to this insistence on

the earthly value of human life, Islam stands alone among the cultural formations of mankind. Other cultures, as for example the Greek and the Roman, laid perhaps no less stress on this point. But, at the same time, they neglected the spiritual needs of man: and their insistence on the value of life was a matter of instinct, a consequence of racial vigour, of an exuberance of vital functions · they loved life because they were alive. In Islam alone life was a postulate and a formulated programme. And little wonder that human beings, who were suddenly confronted with such a *magna charta* of all their instinctive aspirations, flocked to it in ever-increasing numbers as soon as they understood it. They saw that Islam not only "advocated" an international community of people united by their adherence to a common idea, but that it also laid before that proposed community a ready frame for its practical fulfilment: a Law. Since the life-time of the Prophet—which was the beginning of Islamic culture—the Law was there; and whatsoever modifications and alterations might later have crept in, the fundamental structure of Islam, its ideal and practical appeal, was already fully in existence at the time of its sudden, meteoric birth. Because it came as the exponent of an idea and not of a people, it was ready all at once: it did not have to wait for the development of a particular people in order to come into existence. Although it can materialize only through the concrete medium of human beings, its momentum is not restricted to their vitality because—to use a somewhat abstract term—it is deductive, not inductive: it tends from the generalization of an idea downwards to the formation of particular existence, and not *vice versa*. In other words, it depends solely on the knowledge of the "programme" by its potential adherents. If, and as long as, they consciously realize or believe that its postulates coincide with their instinctive desires and requirements, Islamic culture is alive; and as soon as the Muslims lose this direct touch with the intellectual premises of Islam, the life-giving tension between the individual and the postulate

is broken and the cultural frame (that is, the Law) loses its resiliency and becomes mere convention. In that case, the "moral habit" (in Bergson's sense) is gradually replaced by the unproductive automatism of customs, actions and conceptions; and the unavoidable result is a slowing down and a cooling down of all cultural impulses, stagnation, shapelessness of social organization, and at the end—dissolution. The process, however, can as well be reverse: an automatism of *conceptions* may lead to that of actions and customs and thence to the loss of direct intellectual touch with the original propositions and a subsequent decay of cultural forces. And it is not difficult to recognize that the obvious decay of Islamic culture during the last few centuries is almost entirely due to a rigidity of conceptions about it which have lost the vivid import they possessed at the time of their coming into existence and have developed into mechanical repetition.

THE ATTITUDE of the earliest generations towards matters Islamic was personal, they believed in the right and the duty of every Muslim to judge everything for himself on the basis of the Qur'ān and the life-example of the Prophet. But whereas the Companions had that example (and therefore, the solution of most of their problems) before their eyes, for those who followed them the things were—or were made by themselves—more difficult: on the one hand the distance from the time of the Prophet was steadily increasing, and on the other the social structure grew wider and more complicated. And instead of relying on their own powers of interpretation of the law of Islam (*Sharī'ah*) as it appeared in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, the Muslims of the latter half of the first century of the Hijrah committed a fatal mistake: they thought themselves obliged to have recourse not only to the objective testimony of the Companions regarding sayings and doings of the Prophet (which was right), but also to the subjective deductions of the Companions (which were not in every case right) in matters where no clear provision

existed either in the Holy Book or the example of the Prophet. Thus the beginning was made of that unfortunate worship of "authorities" which—almost an exact parallel to that of the Church Fathers in the Roman Catholic dispensation—was destined to have such a paralyzing effect on the social development of Muslims in centuries to come.

The idea that the Companions were infallible in their deductions from, and interpretations of, matters of *Sharī'ah* would certainly have been repugnant to themselves. Humility was a special characteristic of most of them; and none of them ever arrogated to himself the status of an authorized mouthpiece of the Prophet. The exaggerated estimation of the Companions' knowledge was the fault of their later followers who, in their pious and certainly justifiable admiration, became blind to the element of human frailty and imperfection inherent in even the greatest men. Only very few scholars were independent enough to declare, as Imām Shāfi'ī did: "They [i.e., the Companions] were men and *we* are men"—thus reserving to themselves the right of unfettered judgement. Without in the least impairing our estimate of those great friends of the Prophet, we are bound to realize that interpretation does not depend so much on loftiness of character as on knowledge; and knowledge is a matter of progress. We have, for example, only to think of the immense development of psychological notions since the time of the Companions in order to see how much wider possibilities we today have for an understanding of the inner purport of so many social propositions of Islam; and it would be a mistake to believe that later generations might not have still greater possibilities. But this precisely was the mistake committed by the Muslim theologians and jurists of the second and third centuries with regard to the Companions of the Prophet, and by the later centuries with regard to *ahl as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ* ("the righteous predecessors"). Still, some of the early scholars of Islam tried at least to reach individual

conclusions as to the intentions of the Law-giver and the ways of moral and practical conduct required of the Faithful. In this endeavour they were guided by their knowledge of their time no less than by the knowledge of the original sources of Islam · that is, they tried to interpret matters Islamic in the light of their own understanding. A splendid example of this type of mind was Imâm Abū Ḥanīfah. His *fiqh* is probably no more sufficient for the requirements of our time, but it exactly covered the requirements of his— particularly in the domain of practical dealings *(ma'āmilāt)*. But his immediate successors quickly overlooked the element of relativity in his teachings and formed a "school" of rigid imitation ; and the same happened to several other scholars of his period. Their high degree of learning, gained by a life-long and devoted study of the subject, gave those scholars a position of unequalled authority in the eyes of posterity and induced the Muslim masses of later centuries to believe that all the findings of the Imāms represented, objectively, the highest possible stage of religious knowledge and were, therefore, final for all times to come. Such a pontifical elevation was by no means sanctioned by those scholars themselves. They, like the Companions, never claimed to be final authorities in the expositions of the Law ; they gave their opinions as opinions only, and not as verdicts. It is, for example, recorded of Imâm Abū Ḥanīfah that he said: "If you find in my words anything conflicting with the Sunnah of the Prophet, then throw my words to the wall and keep to Sunnah." Such dignified reservations implying the necessity, for every Muslim, of independent judgement were utterly disregarded by the followers—as is often done by followers— and the *ahl as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ* were gradually, and against their intentions, removed from the sphere of progressive criticism, and blind reliance on their authority was made a *quasi* postulate of Islam.

The political conflict between the Umayyads and the 'Abbâsids was destined to play a great role in this develop-

ment. The Umayyads were, with the sole exception of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, notoriously lax in their observance of religious teachings. In order to gain a surer foothold among the Muslim masses to whom religion was of premier importance, the Caliphs of Banū 'Abbās exploited the laxness of their opponents by laying great stress on their own "orthodoxy": that is, they made considerable show of their veneration of *as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ* and encouraged the popular notion of the latter's infallibility. This, together with the natural inertia inherent in the masses and the subsequent inclination to accept ideas in ready-made form, led—from the fourth century of the Hijrah onwards—to that catastrophic stagnation of independent religious thought which was responsible for the decay of Islamic culture in centuries to come. The Muslim intellectual and social life degenerated into that morass of "automatism" to which we have referred above. Conceptions gradually ceased to be "conceived": they were taken over in stereotyped form from generation to generation. Whatever error of thought *as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ* had committed was unquestioningly accepted as truth, and no door was left open for later correction. Thus, the range of ideas was for all times laid down to the extent of that existing during the first three centuries of Islam; and the justifiable respect which every Muslim feels for the great learned and righteous men of the past, their love for the Companions of the Prophet, who had consecrated their whole existence to the promotion and expansion of Islam, was made a vehicle of intellectual inertia in religious problems In every other society, this would have merely diminished the importance of religious thought as a form-giving element in the life of the nation; but in the society of Islam, which was built on religious considerations to the exclusion of all other factors, the petrifaction of religious thought was bound to suffocate the very spirit of life

Now, nobody can deny that many of the findings of the "righteous predecessors" regarding religious problems indeed

represented a very near approach to the real purpose of Islamic teachings and will, therefore, remain embodied in Muslim religious thought until a still nearer approach can be found. The same can be said of their splendid achievements in the domain of methodical investigation of the Prophet's history: as, for example, the enormous amount of thought and labour successfully expended by the early scholars of Islam in scrutinizing the authenticity of Traditions and establishing a method by which the reliable and the unreliable could be discerned. Such achievements of the past can never be dispensed with by the later generations; and, so long as we do not see any way of improving upon the methods of criticism adopted by the old scholars, we are justified in accepting the results of their labour as valid and useful for our time as well. But with *opinions*, that is, subjective judgements or interpretations, of the older generations we are bound to proceed much more carefully. An opinion, however elevated in spiritual rank be its author, is a matter of temperament no less than of objective knowledge. Only the Law-giver himself (in the case of Islam, the Prophet) can claim for his opinions the status of verdicts because he is fully aware of every intention underlying the law he promulgates; and his opinions must be accepted as the final interpretation of the law. This exceptional position can reasonably never be attributed to any lesser personality; its opinions will always have only relative value. For, the way we regard a thing, our *conception* of it, is a highly subjective process and can be only in the rarest of cases (and perhaps never) dissociated from our own temperamental predilections and habits and all the incommensurable influences of our surroundings which act together in shaping of what is known as our personality. The opinion I form of a matter is always based on my previous experiences which lend it their own colour: and so it is not an exactly mirrored replica of the object in question but only its *effect* on me—like a photograph taken through a lens with many irregular facets. And it must not necessarily be the

reflection which *you* would conceive; although there will be a certain amount of similarity between our images if we belong to one and the same time and are submitted to experiences similar in nature.

The inability of the later Muslim legists *(fuqahā')* to recognize this commonplace truth has led to a deformation of many legal and social conceptions in Islam. The Islamic *Sharī'ah*, as presented by them, is only partially derived from injunctions given in unequivocal terms *(naṣṣ)* by the Qur'ān or the Prophet; to a certain extent it is built on deductions, from both, by the early scholars. This was unavoidable, as the Qur'ān and the Prophet could not possibly have made provision for all imaginable constellations of social life in all the times to come; but the unquestioning retention, for all times, of all those older deductions was certainly avoidable. A *naṣṣ* injunction must, of course, always remain valid for a Muslim, whether it comes from the Qur'ān or from a satisfactorily authenticated Tradition; and, indeed, such injunctions are invariably so formulated as to allow of no two interpretations: they are always clearcut and self-contained and their understanding depends only on the knowledge of the Arabic language in which they were pronounced. An injunction, however, which is derived by deduction remains only so long obvious as we are able to identify ourselves with the mental process responsible for it. Such an identification is possible only within similar intellectual environments: and how could these have remained unchanged during the lapse of a full millennium? They certainly did not. And in the same measure as the problems of Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic logic, which one thousand years ago were a living issue to the thinkers of Islam, lost their significance for the later generations, many of the deductions of the old legists, theologians and philosophers became devoid of all real import. But Muslims, in their blind veneration of *as-salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ*, nevertheless stuck to them: and so the whole structure of Muslim theological thought was gradually emptied of life.

Every attempt at new thought was vehemently repulsed as heretic "innovation" because—being the manifestation of another time and another mode of thought—it naturally must have been different from the conceptions of the Old Great Men. The fate of many independent thinkers in the past centuries who were accused of heresy only because they dared, without in the least infringing the validity of *naṣṣ* injunctions, to come to different conclusions than those of the established "orthodoxy," is ample evidence of the intellectual stupor of Muslims with regard to the very foundation of their cultural existence: religious thought.

For, as we have said above, Islamic culture does not draw its nourishment from the life-consciousness of its bearers (although this life-consciousness is its consequence), but rather from their knowledge of its premises which must precede their readiness to fulfil it as a programme; thus, it is primarily an intellectual and not an emotional culture. To be sure, this definition is not to be taken in too narrow a sense: for, however intellectual be its genesis, there is no movement in the life of mankind which could be described as divorced from emotional elements. It is, on the contrary, a curious fact that some of the movements which begin in a purely academic way develop immediately after the beginning an enormous emotional momentum which very soon comes to the foreground of all their manifestations. But whatever be the later relation between the abstract idea and the emotional attempt towards its realization, such movements for ever retain the stamp of their first, intellectual, expression. In this sense, Islamic culture can be safely classified as "intellectual." It began with the promulgation of an idea; and the surging emotion which at once engulfed those who fell under its spell was probably nothing but the homecoming of deep-rooted subconscious instincts and desires which suddenly found themselves mirrored and "justified" in an articulated postulate and thus allowed to emerge into the sphere of consciousness.

The element of consciousness ("knowledge") is of decisive importance in Islam. It is not, like other cultures, the outcome of the organic life of a single race or people or country; its existence is based on the degree of understanding, by its adherents, of its postulates. The Qur'ān propounded a teaching and the outline of a law; and the Prophet exemplified both and gave them a concrete aspect. This is the objective material of Islam. Our understanding of this material, the conceptions we form of it, are our contribution towards Islamic cultural life. When the shaping and reshaping of conceptions and imaginings ceases and becomes a mere automatical repetition of the outward shell of older intellectual processes, then it can be said that the life-current of Islamic culture has been interrupted, and if this interruption assumes the halo of a sacred institution, then the culture of Islam becomes transformed into an historical phenomenon of the past with merely conventional or, at the best, emotional relations to the present. The revival of such a culture can never be brought about by an insistence on the greatness of its past and a tiresome repetition of facts in which that greatness was once manifested: it can come only through a revival of intellectual honesty and independence, that spirit of criticism which, having once found a standard by which to measure truth, is never contented with second-hand conceptions. But the Muslim theology and jurisprudence current today resemble a vast old-clothes shop where ancient ideas, almost unrecognizable as to their original purpose, are mechanically bought and sold and resold; and where the buyers' greatest delight consists in praising the old tailors' skill...

The culture of Islam possesses the splendid uniqueness of having had a clearly discernible beginning: and this, as we have said, enables us to perceive the direction of its inherent will. Such a possibility confers an intellectual duty on every living generation. It does nobody any good if the burden of knowledge is put on the shoulders of the "righteous

predecessor" alone ; they did what they could ; and it is for the living to do what they can. What is really needed is not a readjustment of the teachings of Islam, but of the worn-out conceptions about it. The Muslims must learn once more to approach the problems of Islam with intellectual innocence: that is, with directness of touch and perception. And if they do this they will be able to avoid another mistake, not less dangerous than the imitation of old conceptions : the blind and helpless imitation of "modern," that is, Western conceptions. If the naive faith in "old-time" interpretations—only because they were old—has for centuries formed the most tragic aspect of Muslim cultural life, the hardly less naive faith in Western ideas—only because they are Western—and, consequently, the interpretation of everything Islamic in their light, threatens to become the tragic aspect of the immediate future.

THE PRESENT state of the Muslim World, the decay of its creative forces, the gradual breaking up of its social structure, the emerging of interrogation marks before so many hitherto silently accepted conventional values, the readiness of educated Muslims to accept almost everything that comes to them from the brilliantly illuminated regions of the West—all this seems, on the surface, to point towards a cultural disintegration, and to give right to the non-Muslim critics who maintain that the intellectual and socio-ethical premises of Islam have proved to be inadequate to the demands of a changed world and that, consequently, they are gradually being relegated to the background of history, to make room for new—that is, occidental—forms of thought and social organization. But there are others (and the present writer is with them) who believe that this is not the case. They are unable to perceive that any of the ethical or social propositions of Islam have on merit been rejected by the present time; nor can they see any advantage over them in the corresponding propositions of the Western civilization. It

is true, however, that many of the original intentions of Islam have been brought into a false perspective through an inadequate but nevertheless commonly accepted interpretation, and those of the Muslims who are not in a position to go back for themselves to the original sources and thus to readjust their conceptions are confronted with a partially distorted picture of Islam and things Islamic. All impracticable propositions which are today put forward by a self-styled "orthodoxy" as postulates of Islam are in most cases nothing but conventional conceptions of the original postulates on the basis of the old Neo-Platonic logic which might have been "modern," that is, workable, in the second or third century of the Hijrah, but is extremely out-of-date now. The Muslim educated on Western lines, mostly unacquainted with Arabic and not well-versed in the intricacies of *fiqh*, is naturally prone to regard those worn-out, subjective interpretations and conceptions as reproducing the true intentions of the Lawgiver; and in his disappointment over their inadequacy he draws back from what he supposes to be the real canonical law *(Sharī'ah)* of Islam. Thus, in order that they may once again become a creative force in the life of Muslims, the valuation of the Islamic propositions must be revised in the light of our own understanding of the original sources and freed from the thick layer of conventional interpretations which have accumulated for centuries and have been found wanting in the present time. The outcome of such an endeavour might be the emergence of a new *fiqh*, exactly conforming to the two sources of Islam—the Qur'ān and the life-example of the Prophet—and at the same time answering to the exigencies of present life: just as the older forms of *fiqh* answered to the exigencies of a period dominated by Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic philosophy and to the conditions of life prevailing before the industrial age.

CONCEPT OF LOVE IN RŪMĪ AND IQBĀL

—KH. ABDUL HAKIM

LOVE is a cosmic principle. All beings have their source in God and life is perpetual urge to move back towards that force. Life and love are paradoxical : they are moving forward and yet they are really returning to their source Love is a kind of homesickness.

Love is a force of creative evolution. The processes of assimilation, growth and progress can be satisfactorily explained only through the force of creative love.

The contrast of rationalism with irrationalism : Rūmi and Iqbāl are both irrationalists. Both believe in freedom and will. Both consider the intuition of life as inexpressible by the logic of identity, and both believe feeling and will to be nearer reality than the intellect.

Rūmi and Iqbāl both fight against quietistic mysticism. Both believe struggle to be a genuine element of existence. Both believe Love to be free and immortal.

Iqbal emphasises the aspect of self-assertion more than Rūmi. In general there is considerable identity in their outlook. Both believe that the life of desire and the love of power are genuine expressions of the cosmic urge towards love if rightly directed.

METAPHYSICS is the attempt to understand life as a whole. Reality may or may not be one ; the universe may be as much a universe as a multiverse. Man who reacts on the universe is not the whole of reality : he is a fragment of it and in this fragment too, there is no obvious unity. The sciences concern themselves with his different aspects. There may be a physics of man, chemistry of man and a mathematics of man. Physiology, psychology, ethics, æsthetics, may denote the different aspects of man himself or may describe his different methods of approach to the reality within and without himself.

The various types of metaphysics hitherto propounded as systems have been the results of attempts to consider some one aspect as fundamental and to derive all other aspects from it. Even the attempt to do justice to all the aspects has been dominated by one element more than by another.

The early hylozoists of Greece, starting from the elements of nature, made water, air or fire the primary element and deduced all the multifarious phenomena of existence from that one element. But very early man began to realise this fact also that there are abstract and imponderable elements within him and within the nature around him, that could serve as the bases of more satisfying and comprehensive hypotheses.

The neatness and certainty of mathematics and its universal application convinced the Pythagoreans that abstract measure or mathematics was the essence of Being, a line of thought which culminated in the unchangeable realm of the ideas of Plato. Plato conceived Truth mathematically and laid the firm foundation of the mathematical logic of identity which, systematised by his great pupil Aristotle, has dominated two millenniums of thought in the East and the West. The long, ingenious, and adventurous search after Truth culminated in Greece in an outlook which may correctly be described as intellectualism.

The discovery of Logos is a great achievement of humanity. It endeavoured to bring order into the apparent chaos of human experience and laid the foundation of all sciences which arrange and guide human experience and activity. As I have already said, a system of metaphysics is a conscious attempt to make some one aspect fundamental. It may be an element selected from external nature or it may be an aspect of the internal or mental life of man. The protagonist of every system would rebut this statement and say that this is exactly what metaphysics does not do, because it does not

believe in the finality of fragments and aspects, but makes an attempt to transcend the multiplicity of appearances in order to reach a unity of essence which, although the source of every aspect, is not quite identifiable with any one of them. But the fact remains that all metaphysics is based on analogy. Entire existence is sought to be explained on the analogy of any one of its aspects.

As man began to look inward, the study of the structure of mind revealed to him that the self within has also many aspects. Man does not only think but also feels and wills. But to the early thinkers, thought appeared to be the worthiest aspect of man.

The practical aim of man is to grasp and apperceive as much of experience as possible to satisfy his theoretical and practical instincts. The material phenomena around him and the aspects of feeling and willing within him appeared to be chaotic in comparison with the categories of impersonal reason. That explains the horror that intellectualism felt against indefiniteness and vagueness, and all kinds of infinities. Herbert Spencer called Carlyle an "immeasurable ass" because he was always talking of the abysmal depths of Being and Life and All and the Universe, all with capital letters.

To mathematical logic or intellectualism the definable is more rational than the indefinable, the measurable is superior to the immeasurable, the actual more real than the potential, and consequently the life of feeling and willing is a "big booming buzzing confusion" as compared to that which could be conceptually handled, neatly labelled and categorised. No doubt we do meet among the early Greek thinkers the concept of Love and Hate as fundamental forces but in the main trend of Greek thought Logos overwhelmed all the other aspects.

In the words of Nietzsche, the Apollonian element conquered the Dionysian; cold reason triumphed over ecstasy. But man could not be long satisfied with being reduced to a logical machine. The superb nutritive meal of logic was found to be devoid of certain essential vitamins. Iqbāl has put in a beautiful verse:

> "There is intoxication in knowledge, but it is a Paradise without the soul stirring love of a woman"

There have been various methods of classifying philosophies. They may be dichotomised into realism and idealism, absolutism and phenomenalism, materialism and psychism, etc. But I think one of the most important divisions would be rationalism and irrationalism.

In the history of human thought, Rationalism has assumed and will continue to assume diverse shapes and the same is the case with Irrationalism, and it may be that the pendulum of thought will continue to swing between these two. The crude subjectivism of the sophists and their phenomenalism was also a reaction and the climax which Platonism reached in Neo-Platonism, where the Ineffable One transcended all the categories of Logic as well as of Being is the antithesis or the reductio ad absurdum of Greek intellectualism. The overthrow of classical antiquity in the West by Christianity can also be explained under this hypothesis as the rising in revolt of the feeling and the willing aspect of man over his abstractly logical side. Love was exalted over Law and the feeling aspects were held to be more important than his logical reason. The saint was held in greater esteem than the philosopher. A shallow historian of human thought might lament this as a setback, as an obscurantist reaction, as a triumph of imagination over reason. But my view in this respect is different. However we may deplore the illegitimate and cruel suppression of free and healthy human activities in the name of religion, we cannot

gainsay the fact that religious feeling at its best tried to rescue those essential aspects of man which intellectualism had a tendency to deny and to obliterate.

After this brief introduction we are now in a position to turn to Jalāl-ud-Dīn Rūmī, the mystic poet and thinker of the thirteenth century, whom I consider to be one of the greatest bulwarks of irrationalism and perhaps not only the greatest singer of Love but also its greatest philosopher.

He takes love as the fundamental urge of Being, its ***elan vital*** and its ***raison d'etre***. For him life is fundamentally ultra-rational and all its phenomena, along with the consciousness of them and the Logos that understands them, are derived and secondary aspects. It is a very interesting and instructive study to discover in him, without the undue straining of any point, the primacy of the practical reason of Kant, the ethical monism of Fichte, the religious outlook of Schleiermacher, the 'Will to live' of Schopenhauer, the 'Will to power' of Nietzsche, the intuition of Bergson and the radical empiricism of William James. To a person unacquainted with the works of Rūmī, the claim may sound extravagant and fantastic. But we must not forget the fact that Rūmī is not a system-builder. He represents mainly a vision of life and a tendency. As a philosopher he seems to be a free-lance. His philosophy has to be carefully extracted and arranged before we get out of the wood and have a clear view of the panorama of his thought. He philosophises as Nature produces or the artist creates. Plato talked in dialogues and myths without losing his central thread and Rūmī is unsystematic like Plato, but as with Plato there is a method in this madness.

I will try to summarise briefly for the purpose of this short paper his main utterances about Love being the primary urge of existence. He tells us that the attempt to define love in words is doomed to failure. In this respect art is superior to logic and it is not logic but music which is a partial but

more adequate medium of its expression. Love being paradoxical in nature, the logic of identity which has moulded the spatio-temporal language of man is by nature incapable of expressing it. Love is poison and antidote at the same time. He anticipates the English poet who said that our sweetest songs are those that tell us of saddest thought. There is a secret in the melody of the flute which if divulged would upset the scheme of things. Love is a cosmic force and operates universally from the atom to the star and from worm to man. Love is a movement towards beauty, which being identical with goodness and truth represents perfection and the highest idea. Love is the inherent desire of every being to achieve immortality through negation. The process of assimilation, growth and reproduction are so many manifestations of a cosmic libido. The causal sequence is not rectilinear but circular. All things are moving in a circle back towards the source from which they have emerged. The categories of time and space are created by this movement. Rūmī thinks that intellect and morality are both utilitarian. They swim over the surface and cannot dive into the depths of Being. Only love is an intrinsic value; all other values are extrinsic and instrumental and are to be judged according to their capacity for the realisation of this primary value. Love is the only categorical imperative. It is the only jewel that shines by its own light. Love recognises no rewards and punishments outside of itself. The creed of love is something *sui generis;* it does not completely coincide with any positive religion.

Theologians and jurists hover only about the portico and do not enter the house of Being. Love strikes no bargain with God or man. Love and beauty are the convex and concave sides of existence; they are inseparable. It is a cosmogonical principle which works as a force of creation. Unification and assimilation in every atom and one form of life absorbing another form and being absorbed further is the basis of assimilation and growth.

In the hierarchy of Being everything lower is being taken up by the next higher to it in the scale of existence. There is only life ; death does not exist. Whatever is generally misconceived as death is a stepping stone to higher things. The struggle of existence, which appears so repelling and grim, is the wrong side of the tapestry that is woven by love. When inorganic matter is absorbed by a plant both become evolved in the process ; destruction is only a necessary prelude to growth The object of life is still higher life and a more comprehensive manifestation of love Love is the principle of growth ; and the wage of hatred is retrogression.

The objects of love change, but love grows and continues to ascend rung after rung of the ladder of Being. As an ultra-rationalist he asserts that the ground of Being is not logically knowable ; only feeling is the right approach to reality. The categories of the understanding or what he calls Particular Reason, are from their nature incapable of grasping the ultimate unity of reality. All thought is discursive and dualistic. Reason, he says, is a light and a guide, but it is neither the starting point nor the goal of existence. The external beauty that attracts the lover is not the effulgence of logical truth. Plato said : 'Let us follow where the argument leads,' but Rūmī says : 'Let us follow where the primary urge of life leads, for it is a surer guide than argument '

Rūmī says that in the process of evolution all higher stages emerge out of the lower. His central conception is not truth but life. He thinks that the chief defect of logic is that it separates things by defining them and it becomes incapable of grasping the vital urge which by its own dialectic, continuously transforms things into one another and transcends opposites by a creative synthesis.

We have seen how Rūmī has raised Love into a cosmic principle. His influence on the subsequent thought of about

six centuries has been so enormous that it would be extremely difficult in a short paper to appreciate its full significance through literature, both prose and poetry, and through the moulding of religious doctrine Even later theology has been suffused with his vision and emotion and both the genuine and the pseudo-mystics, poets and poetasters, all seem to be directly or indirectly under his influence. But in the world of Islam it took about six centuries for a cognate spirit to arise whose inspiration and expression remind one constantly of Rūmī.

That was the illustrious philosopher-poet Iqbāl, who departed lately from the material plane of existence. Iqbāl in his long poetical career was affected by various movements of thought and action originating in the past or the present, in the East or the West One can watch him gradually winding his way from philosophy to what may be vaguely called practical mysticism, but like most of the great poets of the East there was a vein of mysticism in him from the very beginning.

Mysticism is not a result of thought and training but is something temperamental. When a great mind is assailed by currents that come from opposite directions it does not and cannot drop any of them but is obliged to take all of them up into a higher synthesis.

Mysticism everywhere has always had a tendency to absolute monism on the one hand and quietism on the other. It is a general indictment of the mystic that his intellect gets swamped by his ecstasies and he loses a sense of the reality around him. For him history becomes an illusory phantasmagoria, and the life of the senses is despised. The freedom of the will is looked upon with suspicion and the merging in the qualityless Absolute becomes the final goal. The love of the individual for the Absolute becomes a suicidal love like the love of the moth for the flame and the merging of the

finite in the infinite self is like the sinking of the bubble in the ocean of infinity.

In the mystical and metaphysical thought of the East, Rūmī, as well as Iqbāl, occupies a similar but a unique place, as fundamentally opposed to this type of mysticism. Let us first note the similarities.

1. Both are ultra-rationalists or, to use the German terminology, irrationalists believing Reason to be secondary and instrumental only.

2. Both are creative evolutionists, believing love to be the creative force that perpetually moves forward towards more and more comprehensive forms of creation, never resting and ever transcending itself.

3. Both are believers in free-will.

4. Both believe intuition or the immediate experience of life to be superior to and deeper than the discursive intellect, and hence both may be called 'Lebens philosophen,' philosophers of life

5. Both believe in self-realisation rather than self-abnegation.

6. Both believe in the eternal evolution of the individual ego and an ever-advancing assimilation of the Divine without any final absorption in which the individual may lose his identity, or negate his selfhood.

7. Both believe in the primacy of Feeling and Willing over Reason.

8. Both spurn quietism, and are what we may now call voluntarists or activists. Reality for them is identical with activity, and in the words of Rūmī even blind activity is preferable to inactivity because blind activity, while not reaching the goal directly, at least exercises certain functions which when rightly directed will prove to have been useful preparations.

Iqbāl, who on account of his independence of mind would not readily undergo discipleship to any one teacher, gladly and proudly calls himself a disciple of Rūmī. He acknowledges the debt sincerely and generously. The similarity between the two is marked and remarkable and the differences, if there are any, are due to differences of time and environment and perhaps slightly of temperament. Iqbāl was not a mystic or a saint in any accepted sense of these terms, but his thoughts and feelings are strongly imbued with the tendencies that go to make the mystic or the saint.

Let us take a few specimens of the thoughts and emotions of Iqbāl about the nature of love and the lover, which may to some extent elucidate the similarities and the slight variations to which I have alluded

1. Love is immortal, it is identical with life.

2. A lover does not take life passively, he does not mould himself according to his environment but moulds his environment according to his free and creative urge; in fact he is a revolutionary.

3. The nature of good and evil cannot be determined theoretically if the supreme value of love is not both the starting point and the goal.

4. Love being an evolutionary urge knows no contentment; it may continuously die unto the old to live unto the new; it is a creator of universes one after the other. There is no stagnant Being; change is universal.

5. Love is identical with the immediate intuition of life.

6. The incessant urge of expanding life finds the existing scheme of things a resistance to be overcome; Iblīs or the Devil represents this aspect of Universal Resistance :

hence the so-called Principle of Evil is a necessary principle; without Evil there would be no Life.

7. Love is the supreme source of all great art, it is the inspiration and the creative impulse of the artist.

8. Love is free; it is the principle of freedom. No slave can be a lover and no lover can be a slave. For the free development of love liberty is necessary. Love is the free instinctive and healthy functioning of the ego in all its aspects.

9. When laws and theologies become petrified, it is only the force of love that can infuse new life into them. Religion without love is a mockery.

10. All philosophies that have not discovered creative love as the solution of the riddle of life have been bouquets of artificial flowers.

11. Nietzsche's philosophy of the 'will to power' is a philosophy of the urge of creative love, rather obliquely presented. It is not antagonistic to the philosophy of love.

12. According to Iqbāl there is only one step from Nietzsche to Rūmī; which unfortunately Nietzsche could not take.

13. Knowledge cannot by itself create love but is a very necessary and helpful instrument.

14. In love alone, the finite is near to, and almost identical with the Infinite; no other approach to the Absolute can ever succeed or satisfy.

15. Desire is the source of life; what is wanted is not the suppression of desire but the intensification and the regulation of it; virtue is desire directed towards the

enrichment of life and vice is the desire directed towards its impoverishment; the ego must be perpetually strengthened and must advance eternally on the stepping stones of its own past achievements and failures.

16. Love is not a life of pure æsthetic contemplation, nor does virtue consist in living according to nature. All real virtue is the perpetual transformation of nature, within and without us. There is no eternally given pattern to which we have to conform.

17. Not the search after God but the perpetual creation of new forces within the ego or what Iqbāl calls the 'discovery of man' is the aim of all religion that is alive Neither intellectualism nor any theology can create the vision that is born only of creative love.

18. Even art is an inadequate expression of this primeval urge; although it is superior to philosophy as an approach to reality and is an interpretation of it. The creative impulse of the artist is almost like the sexual urge; both are nearer to life than any structure of ideas.

19. The aim of life is the objectification of its immense and incalculable possibilities. Iqbāl agrees with William James that no block universe exists and even God is not a static or changeless reality. God is a perpetual creator; He never ceases to create and His ceaseless creation is a realization of Himself. Immutability is not one of His attributes; love and life cease to be when they cease to create and renovate.

20. Love does not annihilate itself before its object; its aim is to conquer its object and assimilate it to itself; it does not stoop to conquer but on the other hand develops itself and strengthens itself for the task.

Love is the deepest and the most soul-stirring of all instincts and emotions of man, and philosophy is the driest of human expressions. In presenting to you in this arid prose the richness of Rūmī and Iqbāl I feel I have been guilty of turning their wine into water. In the words of Goethe: 'Grau ist alle Theorie und grün des Lebens goldner Baum' (All theory is like dry leaves but the Tree of Life is green).

کاش که هستی زبانے داشتے　　تا زمستان پرده ها برداشتے

LAW AND CULTURE IN ISLAM

"Jurisprudence is the soul's cognizance of its rights and obligations."—Abū-Ḥanīfa

—A.A.A. FYZEE

LAW and culture are so closely inter-related, and the influence of the one upon the other is so great, that before dealing with the subject proper, it may be well to have some clear notion of the word "culture " Volumes have been written about culture. It is not proposed to consider the question in all its aspects and define what is said to be well-nigh indefinable. But it is well to remember that, as I understand the term 'culture,' religion is not an essential part of it [1]

---

(1) The relation of *culture* and *religion* must certainly differ with different religions. There are religions controlling and regulating the entire life of their followers; and there are others which have lesser and more limited scope for their prerogatives. Even in its narrowest sense of relation between God and Man, religion seems to be an "essential part" of culture in Islam. For it has rightly been observed Islam is theocentric in its literal sense God must obviously be the central factor in all theistic religions; and so it is no wonder if this is the case in Islam for all devotional services and fasting and pilgrimage. But that is not all the idea of the equality of man and the rejection of linguistic, geographical, ethnic, chromatic and other factors of superiority in Islam are also based on the common belief in the One God and nothing else Again, if one has to pay the yearly surplus-property tax *(zakat)*, it is only for the sake of, and under the command of God and not for any right whatsoever possessed by the recipient of the tax. Or, if one wages war (*jihad*) in Islam, it is neither for the purpose of plundering others nor in order to impose one's superiority, but only in the path of God, "to establish the kingdom of God," and "that His word alone should prevail." Moreover, if one testifies in a court of law, he has to take oath in the name of God if one is prohibited from committing suicide, it is because one is not one's own property but God's and even the whole moral code of Islam has no other sanction but the religious. In short, if religion signifies at least the relation between God and Man, religion must lie at the root and basis of all culture in Islam—and it signifies much more to Muslims !—Ed., *I.C.*

It has been said that culture is what beautifies and dignifies life. It has also been said that when you have forgotten all that you consciously set out to learn, what remains is culture. It is not merely the acquisition of knowledge according to the standards of the age; it is to see things in their right perspective, to take a balanced view of life, to measure ideas in their right proportions by a true criterion Above all, it is to see and to appreciate the other man's point of view, and yet preserve the intellectual liberty of not agreeing with it. Religion, language, race, country—these are but the strands out of which is woven the variegated fabric of culture.

Culture is concerned principally with the intellect of man, not with his soul. Religion may therefore colour his attitude to life, but it cannot be the main part of culture. Culture is not concerned with the problem of the salvation of the soul of man. If it were, there could be no true cultural commerce between the adherents of different religions. Culture is concerned with the life of the spirit only in so far as the mind of man attains the prevailing intellectual norm.

To give a working definition, it is enough to say that culture is the general intellectual level in a particular age or country; and he who attains this intellectual level is a cultured man. It is therefore undeniable that in different epochs of history and in different countries, the standards of culture have varied immensely.

It must not be thought however that these observations are made in a dogmatic spirit. Upon these and allied questions there is considerable room for difference of opinion based upon the different aspects of culture, upon different shades and nuances of thought, and upon different angles and biases of judgement. But as the prevalent mood in our country appears emphatically to include religion as an essential part of culture, a note of warning must be sounded at the beginning of our study.

The law may be considered either as God-made or man-made ; this analysis however is not wholly accepted by modern jurists. Law and society are so intimately connected together that, as Allen says, "Law will never again be looked upon solely as a command, but as a function of society, which, to be understood, must be considered in alliance with the study of the whole structure of society."[2] The same author describes the growth of the law and says, "Law streams from the soul of a people like national poetry, it is as holy as the national religion, it grows and spreads like language ; religious, ethical, and poetical elements all contribute to its vital force."[3]

In Islam law and religion are inextricably intermingled. "It is to be remembered that Hindu and Muhammadan Law are so intimately connected with religion that they cannot be readily dissevered from it."[4] In Islam there is no distinction between law and religion, civil and criminal law, judges and magistrates. The law is to be obeyed not for temporal reasons, but to achieve a spiritual end, for the sole purpose of the salvation of man. *Shariat* (strictly, *Sharī'a*) in Islam is analogous to *Dharam* in Hindu law ; it is fundamentally a doctrine of duties, a code of obligations. The sanctions are moral rather than legal. Legal considerations and individual rights are secondary ; the supreme tendency is towards a religious and ethical evaluation of the facts of life.

We have now to consider the origin of law in Islam and how authority was vested in the judges. The story preserved in the traditions gives us a very clear insight into the way in which the authority of the qāḍīs arose and the principles upon which they were to act. It is said that the Prophet sent Mu'ādh, one of his Companions, as governor of a province, and also appointed him to be the distributor of justice. No trained lawyers existed then, and the Prophet asked :

(2) C.K. Allen, *Law in the Making*, 1st Edition, p. 23.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 54.

(4) Per Mahmood, J., p. 7 All. pp. 775–781.

"According to what shalt thou judge?"

He replied:

"According to the scriptures of God."

"And if thou findest nought therein?"

"According to the traditions of the Messenger of God."

"And if thou findest nought therein?"

"Then I shall interpret with my reason."

The Prophet thereupon said:

"Praise be to God who has favoured the messenger of His Messenger with what His Messenger is willing to approve."[5]

This illuminating story gives us three out of the four sources of the law. Islamic law is based in the first instance upon the legislative pronouncements of the Qur'ān. When the Qur'ān is silent on a particular point, then we have to consider the Traditions of the Prophet, the words that he spoke, his actions on important occasions, and the manner in which he acted throughout his life. The *practice* of the Prophet constitutes the Sunna, and next to the Qur'ān, the Sunna has the binding force of law. These two sources taken together are considered as revelation; the first is said to be direct revelation, the very Word of God; and the second is considered as indirect revelation, because according to the theory of the law, even the worldly actions of the Messenger of God were inspired by divine wisdom.

In the last answer, Mu'ādh refers to his power of reasoning. It is this part which is of the utmost importance in the Muslim system of jurisprudence. The power of reasoning, the capacity of education, the arriving at new

(5) Tirmidhī, *Kitab* 13, *bab* 3, (Mujtabai Press, Delhi, 1923, Vol. I, p. 159); Abū Dā'ūd, p. 23, II, (Mujtabai Press, Delhi, 1927, II, p. 149). A A A. Fyzee, *Introduction to Muhammadan Law*, pp. 21-22; Tyabji, *Muhammadan Law*, 3rd ed., p. 18; Aghnides, *Introduction to Muhammedan Law*, p. 76.

results from fundamental postulates is one of the basic elements of Islamic jurisprudence. Even the technical name of the law is *Fiqh*, which means "intelligence, insight."[6]

Apart from the first two sources, which may be considered as primary, there are certain rules deduced from them by doctors of authority upon which there is a consensus of opinion; this consensus is called *Ijmā'*, and it is the third source of law. Or else, there may be rules upon which there is no consensus of opinion to guide the judge. In that case the judge is ordered to exercise his own reasoning faculty and to follow his own individual opinion. While exercising his own judgement he must, of course, consider carefully all the rules laid down in the first three sources. This power of deduction and judgement is called *Qiyās*, analogical deduction, and it is the fourth source of law.

These are all well-known concepts in Islam and the reason why they are discussed here is to compare them with modern notions of jurisprudence. We may aptly compare the four sources in Islamic law with a modern statement of fundamental principles such as the Swiss Code, Art. I. "The Statute," says the Swiss Code, "governs all matters within the letter or the spirit of any of its mandates. In default of an applicable statute, the judge is to pronounce judgement according to the customary law, and in default of a custom, according to the rules which he would establish if he were to assume the part of a legislator. He is to draw his inspiration, however, from the solutions consecrated by the doctrine of the learned and the jurisprudence of the courts—par la doctrine et la jurisprudence."[7]

Let us look closely into Article I. The statute may be compared with the Qur'ān; the Qur'ān has been felicitously

(6) A.J. Wensinck, *Muslim Creed*, p. 110.
(7) B. Cardozo, *Nature of the Judicial Process*, 140–141.

likened to an "amending act;"[8] it is not a complete and self-contained code. The text of the Qur'ān is the very "Word of God;" it is as binding—even more so—as the plain letter of the statute, for it has both a legal and a moral sanction. Customary law in Islam is not considered as of primary mportance, because the rules laid down by the Prophet were conoclastic rather than traditional. He came to change the ustoms of Arabia, not so much to preserve them. That loes not mean, however, that he changed everything for the ake of a change Every reformer must look into the needs, ustoms, and manners of the people. The greatest reformers lways follow the sound principle of not changing that which equires no change. Thus in all Islamic countries, customary aw has been preserved by the sons of the soil, even after onversion to Islam. The Berbers of the Maghrib, the Fellaheen of Egypt, the agriculturists on the banks of the Euphrates and in the Punjab, the Dihqāns of Persia, the Khojas, Memons, and Mapillahs of India, and other communities in Java and Sumatra have preserved some of their ustoms, despite the binding word of the Qur'ān, and this is aluable evidence of the strength and vital force of custom. Nevertheless, in theory, custom is not justifiable and efforts re always being made to do away with it; a modern instance n India is the Shariat Act, 1937. Custom however has come o be recognized in Islamic jurisprudence and is known by he technical name of *'Āda*[9]

We have dealt with the first two elements of Article I, he statute and custom We must now consider the last part. The judge, in default of the statute and customary law, is sked to assume the role of legislator. He is instructed to

8) Tyabji, *Muhammadan Law*, 3rd ed. 4.

9) *'Urf*, *ta'amul* and *taqrir* are also similar concepts in Muhammadan Law. Dr. Md. Hamidullāh kindly sends me a reference to *Musnad*, Ibn-Hanbal, iii, 425, where it is laid down that good pre-Islamic practices may be adopted in Islam.

make the law; but in making the law he must go back to the ancient learning. He is not permitted to tear himself away from the shackles of the past. He cannot begin with a clean slate. His mind must be trained and disciplined by the jurisprudence of the elders; he must have read widely in the law; he should have pondered deeply over the problems of jurisprudence. The deductions which he proposes to make must be based upon fundamental principles which go far deeper than the mere applications of the law

This is almost exactly what the judge is asked to do in Islam; the terminology used in the Swiss Code is modern, but the method is the same. The importance of the opinion of the qāḍī was due to his influence in society and on the culture of the times. The qāḍī was a definite type in learned society; his training, experience and ability gave him an opportunity to study life from a particular angle. And there is another parallelism as well. Today we insist that a judge should possess "character." So did Islamic civilization. But with this difference that "piety," as understood in the Muslim religion, was a condition precedent to an appointment.

An interesting sidelight on the "character" of the qāḍī, his duties, his behaviour and his independence, is afforded by one single example of the "instructions" given to him. The Great 'Umar, Second Caliph of Islam, in his instructions to qāḍīs, laid down that, in the first instance, the qāḍī should follow the principle of the Qur'ān and then the practice of the Prophet. Every person, high or low, rich or poor, is to be treated with equality. The forms of procedure should be properly followed and proper evidence obtained before a decision is given. Lawful compromises are to be encouraged. Even after judgement, if the qāḍī feels that an error has crept in, he should not stand on his dignity, but should review his judgement, for "it is better to retract than to persist in injustice." "Use your intelligence about matters that perplex you, to which neither law nor practice seems to apply; study

the theory of analogy, then compare things, and adopt that judgement which is most pleasing to God and most in conformity with justice, so far as you can see."

"God will judge you in accordance with your secret character though he leaves you to follow appearances. In the courts of justice avoid fatigue and the display of weariness or annoyance at the litigants; therein God enables you to earn reward and make a handsome store. For when a man's conscience towards God is clear, God makes His relations with man satisfactory, whereas if a man simulate before the world what God knows that he has not, God will put him to shame."[10]

We have here ability, character, and independence; patience, courtesy and consideration; and in addition, *piety* or *fear of God*, as understood in Islam. Thus the qāḍīs, by their training, ability, and character constituted an important element in cultured society: by their work, opinions, and writings they moulded the thought and culture of the times.

We have seen that in Islam there is no distinction between civil and criminal law, between judges and magistrates; nor indeed, between law and religion. The qāḍī performed not only legal, but secular and semi-religious duties. He sat in the courts and decided cases. People went to him for advice and arbitration. Often he was a preacher and interpreter of religion. Occasionally he was a confidant and adviser of the king. Thus he was both a cultural and moral force in society. His existence was due to "the primordial necessity of order in the social life."[11] The state was theocratical, hence it was only natural that religion should be intermixed with law.

---

(10) Tyabji, *Muhammadan Law*, 3rd ed., 83–84, citing D.S. Margoliouth in *JRAS* for 1910, 311, 316.

(11) B. Cardozo, *Nature of the Judicial Process*, 141.

The authority of the judge was derived from the secular power. Judges were appointed in the name of the king, and in the absence of the king, by the governor of the different provinces. There is, curiously enough, in this respect a close similarity to the judge in England. The real source of power, the fountain-head of the law, was the sovereign. And the power and authority of the judges arose by delegation, as in the case of the Chancery judges. In England the king delegated certain powers to the Lord Chancellor; and the Lord Chancellor in turn delegated certain of his powers to the Chancery judges. The power and method of appointment of the qāḍīs in the early days of the caliphate remind one forcibly of those of the Chancery judges. This curious similarity can be readily perceived from a perusal of a recent work by a French jurist, Emile Tyan, in his ***Histoire de l'Organisation Judiciare en pays d'Islam.***[12]

The prestige of the judges depended upon the independence they enjoyed. Although appointed by the sovereign, they were servants of the law only. They owed their allegiance solely to the *Sharī'a*.[13] Many instances are recorded of kings and nobles and high personages being brought before

---

(12) Paris, 1938, Vol. I, 140 This is a work of great importance for the study of the early history of Islamic Jurisprudence. It is written by a Lebanese Christian whose mother-tongue is Arabic and who is a teacher of law by profession. He deals in his book with the functions and powers of the qādi; the administration of justice in the early days of Islam; the composition of the tribunal, and the ideals of justice. Thus the book, despite some shortcomings, is a valuable contribution to the study of the origin and development of judicial administration in the Islamic state. Only the first volume has so far appeared, the publication of the second volume is apparently delayed by the war. The promise of the volume before us makes all students of Islamic law await with impatience the appearance of the second. It is to be hoped that, although it is written in French, the work will become better known in India

(13) M.B. Ahmad, ***Administration of Justice in Medieval India***, 274-275. King punished by qadi, ibid, 254-256.

the qāḍī and treated like ordinary citizens. Before the law of God every man was equal.[14] As Tyan observes, "Lememe principe d'egalite doit etre observé lorsque les parties engagent le débat devant le kāḍī. Aucune distinction ne doit etre faite entre le riche et le pauvre, le puissant et le faible, l'esclave et l'homme libre, le musulman et le non-musulman. La doctrine insiste sur ce principe d'égalité."[15] It must not however be supposed that this principle was always followed ; there were many instances of the judges being corrupt. The ideal was not always acted upon. And it was clear that, as in other countries, the level of culture and civilization rose in proportion to the ability and integrity of the judges.

The functions and powers of the qāḍīs being high, they constituted a learned and respected class reflecting a special type of culture and influencing society by their example. It is therefore practically correct to say that the better the judges, the higher the level of civilization ; a corrupt judiciary clearly indicated the general decline of culture and civilization.

In addition to the qāḍīs, there was another class of lawyers called *muftīs*. A *fatwā* is a formal legal opinion given by a *muftī* or canon lawyer of standing in answer to a question submitted to him either by a judge or by a private individual. The person who asks the question is called *mustaftī* ; the person who is authorized to give the answer is the *muftī* ; the opinion given is the *fatwā*. The office of the *muftī* was very high and was closely associated with that of the qāḍī. On a

(14) Dr. M. Hamidullah has kindly drawn attention to the fact that in Islam there is no such maxim as ' The king can do no wrong." The king is subject to the *Sharī'a* ; even the caliph could be deposed by the *fatwa* of the Chief Mufti of Islam, like the Shaykhu'l-Islam of Ottoman Turkey, See M. Hamidullah, *Muslim Conduct of State*, 80 sqq.

(15) E. Tyan, *Histoire de l'Organisation Judiciare en Pays d'Islam*, I, 416.

fatwā being given, the qāḍī had to decide accordingly; and in the case of a private person, the opinion guided his conduct, both ethically as well as legally.

The conditions for office as *muftī* were not less exacting than those necessary for the office of the qāḍī. He must be a Muslim, of the age of majority, and must possess a sound mind; he must also possess the qualifications of truthfulness and justice, and must be an expert in law. He must know jurisprudence in its entirety and must possess the ability to decide difficult questions for himself.[16]

The whole institution of *muftīs* shows its dual character of guiding righteously the conduct of men and of giving expert aid to the judges of the realm. It is clear that the office, at the beginning merely a recognition of the excellence of a man in the knowledge of law, became intimately associated with the administration of justice. The hard-worked qāḍī could always refer a difficult question to a *muftī*, whose decision would then be a persuasive guide. In India, where there was not merely the Muslim community to deal with, there were expert pandits appointed to help the court in arriving at a decision involving a point of Hindu law. Thus the qāḍīs of the Mughal empire, according to their own principles, were guided both by Hindu and Muslim expert jurisconsults

Qāḍīs and *muftīs* formed together an important link in the administration of justice and there are many biographical works devoted solely to their lives and works. The decisions of famous *muftīs* were collected and published for the guidance of lawyers and courts. There are numerous collections of *fatwās*, and we have in the *Fatāwā Ālamgīrī*, *Fatāwā Qāḍī Khān*, and the *Jāmi' ash-Shittāt*, three of the commonest examples so far as India goes. The first two are Hanafī; the last is according to the Ithnā 'Asharī Shi'a school

(16) *Ibid.*, i, 323 sqq.

The administration of justice in India during the Muslim period is an important subject for our study, and it was unfortunate that until lately there was no work devoted to it. This lacuna has now been adequately filled by Mr. M B Ahmed, I.C.S. His work, ***The Administration of Justice in Medieval India***, published by the Aligarh Historical Research Institute in 1941 (Sulaiman Research Series, No. 1), is a serious and welcome contribution to a little known subject. The material for such a study is so scattered and its systematic presentation so difficult for a historian unequipped with legal training, that it is not suprising that we had to wait so long for it. Mr. Ahmed deals with the judicial system in all its aspects and his summary and conclusions are extremely suggestive.

Whether we consider the general history of Islam or the history of Islamic domination in India, it is abundantly clear that the office of qāḍī at its inception was high and noble. It is therefore sad to observe how debased, mechanical, and mercenary it has now become in India. The "kazi" is now often quite innocent of any learning, much less is he an expert in the Fiqh. His only function is to celebrate marriages, reciting formulas which, more often than not, he does not understand. He maintains a register, which, often enough, he is unable to write up himself, and employs a 'nā'ib' (assistant, deputy) to help him. Occasionally a "kazi" realizing his own limitations and being conscious of his responsibility, employs a 'nā'ib' who is far more learned than himself. But probably the most extraordinary development in India has been that "kazi" has become a surname and the fact that a man has this august title does not in the least mean that he possesses any of the qualifications of his high office, except the very doubtful one of extraction from a cultured stock.

In discussing the influence of law on culture, a few examples may be taken to illustrate the changes that law

brought about in social conditions. The altered social conditions in turn produced a different type of society with a different code of behaviour and general outlook.

We may consider in the first instance women and marriage, and problems relating to inheritance. The reforms brought about by Islam while not producing a monogamous society, ameliorated to a large extent the condition of women by limiting polygamy, and by giving to them definite rights upon divorce. These rights not only gave them an independent economic status, but brought about their recognition as independent units of society. For instance, in spite of the general guardianship of the father, mothers were given the right of the custody of infant children for certain definite periods. On marriage the woman had the right to dower. In pre-Islamic Arabia dower (*ṣadāq*) was paid to the father, and may therefore be likened to a sale. But in Islamic law, dower (*mahr*) was paid as a mark of respect to the wife, and the idea of sale was gradually eliminated. If the dower remained unpaid at the death of the husband, the law gave to the woman a new protection. It laid down that she could retain possession of her husband's property until her claim for dower was satisfied by the husband's heirs.

In regard to marriage, two important reforms, which entirely changed the outlook of women on society, were, first of all, the option of puberty, and secondly, rights upon dissolution of marriage. In pre-Islamic Arabia, marriage arranged by parents was indissoluble at the suit of the wife; whereas the husband could discard her at any time and without assigning any reason. In Islamic law the woman, when married as a minor, has the absolute option, on coming of age, either to agree to the marital status or to sever the connection

As regards dissolution of marriage, she had the right not only to obtain her freedom, but also to ask for the pay-

ment of her dower. Even apart from the question of dower she had the right at the time of marriage to make a contract with the husband. The performance of the contract became binding on him on account of the right to dissolve the marital tie which was coupled with it. The wife could say in certain circumstances, "You have not kept the agreement entered into at the time of marriage; I therefore divorce you and claim my dower."

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of these two reforms; the result of the first reform was that no adult woman was compelled to remain the wife of a husband she abhorred, and the result of the second was that among educated classes the stipulations concerning marriage were clearly visualized and the agreement between the parties in regard to residence, pin-money, etc., could be enforced by the wife by a stipulation which gave her the power to release herself from the bond of marriage, when it became irksome to her.

It is not the purpose of this article to go into the details of the way in which Muslim society as a whole reacted to these changes, but it is sufficient to point out that these were the most important of the rules which gave to women a new status and a new outlook

In regard to inheritance, perhaps the most important rules which may here be mentioned are that women were given the right to inherit and that the nearest relations, regardless of sex, got portions of the inheritance The old rule that sex was an absolute bar was completely abrogated. Thus the mother, the daughter, and the sister could take shares in their own right, and secondly, the whole line of cognates became entitled to inheritance. If the woman was not debarred, there was no reason why her descendants should be entirely excluded. Here again women became entitled to property; with the acquisition of property they acquired a

sense of responsibility ; property and a sense of responsibility together gave them a new status, legal as well as social. It was this sense of security and independence which produced, in the Middle Ages at least, social conditions whereby women became very powerful elements in society.

It is well known, for instance, that the mother has always been a very powerful force in Muslim society. Among Mughal emperors, the queen-mother was often a force operating independently of the emperor. During the whole span of the Ottoman empire, the *Valide Sultan* (the king's mother) was a power to be reckoned with ; for she was regent when the king was a minor ; she was the first lady in the land ; she was the absolute sovereign of the harem ; she had a title of her own, a large monetary allowance from the state, and a position of great influence and power

The importance given to woman by the Islamic reform has led directly to her acquiring a position of absolute equality in modern life. The trend of modern law is to place woman on a footing of absolute equality with man. While it is recognized that physical, emotional, and economic causes may in certain circumstances make her dependent upon man, it must also be remembered that in many spheres of life, man is just as dependent upon woman for his physical and spiritual needs. It is therefore to the credit of Islam that it constituted a half-way house towards the complete habilitation of the status of woman.

Apart from the purely legal aspect, we may also draw attention to the fact that the idea of chivalry was brought to Europe through contact with the Saracens. Chivalry involved not merely certain manly qualities, but an especial regard and respect for woman. The idea of chivalry is therefore a heritage of Islam ; and chivalry itself was the precursor of the modern doctrine of the absolute legal and social equality of woman in all spheres of life.

Proceeding from personal and social questions to an altogether public one, there are two points to which attention must be drawn as being of peculiar importance in modern times. Dr. M. Ḥamīdullāh, has, in a series of learned articles entitled *Muslim Conduct of State*,[17] in the *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, shown that Islamic books of tradition and historical works are replete with rules giving a clear conception of the beginnings of international law, both public and private. Public international law is generally supposed to have originated from the work of the 17th century Dutch Jurist, Grotius; and the work of Dr. Ḥamīdullāh is valuable as it demonstrates reliably that rules analogous to international law were developed several centuries earlier in Islamic civilization.

Another recent work, entitled the *Law of War and Peace in Islam*, by Dr. M. Khadduri,[18] discusses with reference to original authorities some of the important rules concerning the waging of war and the making of peace. In the law of war, the most important topic is the law of *jihād* (Holy War), and in the law of peace, the most important subject is the treatment meted out to non-Muslims called *dhimmīs*. It is thus abundantly clear that the beginnings of both private[19] and public international law are to be sought much earlier than the 27th century A.D.

---

(17) Dr. M. Hamīdullāh, *Muslim Conduct of State*, Islamic Culture, 1941 and 1942. Reprinted, Hyderabad, 1942.

(18) Dr. M. Khaddurī, *Law of War and Peace in Islam*, Luzac, London, 1941.

(19) The reader may profitably be referred to the following monograph, viz., *La Conception et la pratique du droit international privée dans l'Islam*, (etude juridique et historique), par Choucri Cardahi, The Hague, 1937, (publication of the Academie du droit international). The subject as well as this work has been prescribed in the LL. M. course of the Osmania University. (Ed.—*I.C.*)

The relationship between law and culture being close, it is now necessary, by way of conclusion to consider the chief results of their interplay and to see how far culture was affected by law. In the first instance, the law emphasized the capacity of man to reason out things for himself. The law consisted not merely of what was laid down by God or the Prophet; it also consisted, in part at least, of the doctrines deduced by the learned from the inspired words and writings. This part kept on increasing in each succeeding century, and it was this part which in different countries evolved in different directions. The respect due to religion was fully shared by the law; thus rose the dignity of the law and the regard for the work of the great jurists.

If the law gave new dignity to the fruits of the human mind, it also produced a great respect for learning and learned men. The study of law was recommended by religious and secular authorities. There is a tradition of the Prophet that the quest for knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim, male or female. This was often chosen as an inscription on famous houses of learning. The Madrasa of Bukhara, built by Ulughbeg (d. 1449), bore this remarkable inscription.[20] Another saying, which is also a commonplace in Islamic literature, is that the ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr. The Shāfi'ite doctor Nawawi in the commencement of his classical work on the Fiqh, *Minhāju ṭ-Ṭālibīn*, reminds us that "the pursuit of knowledge is among the best ways of obedience to God." Such are the traditions and sayings which give us an insight into the feelings of respect felt for learning and the learned during the palmy days of Islamic civilization.

It is a matter of general agreement that one of the unmistakable features of Islamic civilization, throughout its long history, is its quenchless thirst for knowledge. The promotion of learning and respect for the learned was to be

(20) V. V. Barthold, *Musulman Culture* (trans. Suhrawardy), 127.

found in each period and in each country. It cannot be gainsaid that there were times of struggle and tyranny when the torch of learning was not uplifted, but it never ceased to burn. At the first opportunity the torch was held aloft and passed on to succeeding generations. Besides, it was not merely the torch as it came to them, it was a torch enriched by the investigations of previous generations. Thus Islam brought Greek learning to Europe; but it was a learning greatly developed by remarkable advances in all directions.

The study of the law and its applications advanced rapidly during the centuries and its ultimate development produced a great system of jurisprudence. This jurisprudence consists of two parts: Principles (*uṣūl*) and Applications (*furū'*). Beginning with the study and application of a few principles from the Qur'ān and Traditions it developed into a vast and intricate science, the full extent of which can only be realized if one looks at bibliographies and manuscript catalogues. The logical perfection of Islamic jurisprudence, its breadth of vision, its high idealism, its ethical and moral value, its great value as a civilizing force, its formal completeness as to matters of detail and the vastness of its literature have been repeatedly emphasized by students, both oriental as well as occidental. It is sufficient for our purpose to repeat the eloquent tribute of a European student of Turkish law · "Considered from the point of view of its logical structure, the system is one of rare perfection, and to this day it commands the admiration of the student. Once the dogma of the revelation to the Prophet is admitted as a postulate, it is difficult to find a flaw in the long series of deductions, so unimpeachable do they appear from the point of view of formal logic and of the rules of Arabic grammar. If the contents of that logical fabric are examined, some theories command not only admiration but surprise. Those Eastern thinkers of the 9th century laid

down, on the basis of their theology, the principles of the Rights of Man, in those very terms, comprehending the rights of individual liberty, and of inviolability of person and property; described the supreme power in Islam, or the caliphate, as based on a contract implying conditions of capacity and performance, and subject to cancellation if the conditions under the contract were not fulfilled; elaborated a law of war of which the humane, chivalrous prescriptions would have put to the blush certain belligerents in the Great War; expounded a doctrine of toleration of non-Muslim creeds so liberal that our West had to wait a thousand years before seeing equivalent principles adopted."[21]

Islam, as is well-known, spread with great rapidity after its promulgation; the Islamic state increased to an extraordinary extent. It is therefore not surprising that the law developed on different lines in different countries. In North Africa, the Mālikī system took strong root and developed to the exclusion of all other systems; in Egypt, Turkey, and India the Ḥanafī system flourished; in Persia the Shī'ite jurisprudence found a fertile soil; the Shāfi'ite system is to be found on the shores of Arabia, India, Ceylon, and Java; the heart of Arabia retained and nourished the Ḥanbalite school. Beginning with a few simple principles the law developed differently in different countries, and while we see the divergent forms in which it has developed the central core remains the same. The careful study of these different systems also indicates clearly the diverse customs and rules of social behaviour which have become embedded in the general pattern of legal rules and procedure.

Another point which must be emphasized is the effect on international law. International law proper dates from the 17th century; but its roots are to be found in the customs and usages followed by many races of antiquity. It is therefore of great interest to have a coherent and logical view of those rules

(21) Count Leon Ostrorog, *The Angora Reform* (London, 1927), 30.

of behaviour which may be said to be the precursors of the more strictly formulated rules of international law. In Islamic literature a wealth of material can be found for the study of these and allied questions.

In social life, the law, as we have seen, produced many changes both direct as well as indirect, and often quite unforeseen. A direct result of legal reform was the change in the status of woman in general; an indirect result was the peculiar rule of *purda* or *gosha* which is to be found in Northern India. In the latter instance a text of the Qur'ān was applied, both by custom and under religious influence, during times of great political stress, in a manner quite at variance with the original ideas of Islam. It is absolutely beyond question that a similar custom of seclusion does not prevail in any other Islamic country.

Proceeding from particular instances to a general concept, Islamic law was responsible to a large extent in helping us to arrive at the modern juristic notion of equality before the law. It is nowadays a fundamental principle of civil law that all men are equal before the law; that all religions are of equal importance in the eye of the law; that the truth or otherwise of a particular religion is irrelevant before a court of law. Freedom of worship and freedom from persecution, as the result of apostasy or excommunication, are firmly rooted in our law.

Now, in the matter of the equality of all religions and tolerance in the matter of belief, it appears that our civilization has passed through at least two distinct stages, before arriving at the third and last stage. Before Islam, there was no equality and hardly any tolerance, whether in Anglo-Saxon England or in ancient India.[22] In Islam, there was equality between the adherents of Islam, but only tolerance for others. After Islam,

(22) G. Buhler, *Laws of Manu*, Chap. XI, 127, regarding murder, may be cited as one typical example.

there is, under the law, perfect equality between the adherents of *all* religions. The law has become entirely secular; there can be no such thing as a 'state religion' in a theocratic sense; religion has become a purely personal matter; each individual is at liberty to believe what he likes, provided his actions do not interfere with the similar right of every other individual in the state.

In conclusion it is necessary to point out the undoubted defects of Islamic law and its influence on Islamic society. The two greatest defects are its formalism and its static character.

Throughout the centuries the law has tended to become formal. Eternally there is the discussion whether the forms and ceremonies have been complied with, whether the minutiæ of the *Sharī'a* have been satisfied; whether minor details, no longer of any material consequence, have been followed or not. In Egypt the question was raised whether subscription to government loans is lawful; in India it has been debated whether a person who does not wear a beard should be given the permission to marry. Lawyers are always fond of forms and subtleties; their minds are full of nice distinctions and specious precedents. But when formalism exceeds certain limits it becomes a definite bane.

A second objection to Islamic law is its static character. The law, it is said, should be dynamic, not static. If the system is God-made to begin with, and after 6 or 7 centuries it is laid down that the "Gates of Interpretation" are closed; that no new interpreter has authority to change the interpretation of law; that all that you have to do is to follow without question (*bilā kayfa*) the ancient principles, then matters are bound to come to a standstill.[23]

(23) Islamic law undoubtedly arrived at the doctrine of "Closing the Gate of Interpretation" and not allowing individuals to exercise their own independent judgement. This is discussed by many authors ; one simple discussion is by Ostrorog, *Angora Reform*, 26-30. Iqbal, in his *Reconstruction of Thought in Islam* (1st ed., Lahore, 1930), pp. 242-

To both of these objections the only answer that can l given is that given by Turkey and Egypt. We have to stud carefully the ancient rules ; we have to see how far they we suited to the social conditions of those times ; we have next t see whether they will be useful to us now and if any chan is needed ; and if a wise change is needed, we cannot allow tl community to suffer merely through blind respect for the pa and a hatred for innovation.

One of the greatest Turks that ever lived, the Emper Bābur, is reported to have said : "If the father has promulgat good laws, they should be preserved ; if they are bad, th should be replaced by good ones."[24] It was the Ottoman Turl who, of all the Muslim peoples, hearkened to this advice. Fo centuries later came the Turkish Revolution, and the Sick Ma of Europe emerged as the Strong Man of Asia.

244, has shown however that such a doctrine is not in accord with th original principles of religion, and he also indicates a method o repealing certain rules and saving the community from the dead hand of the past. This has been done in our own times by Turkey, and th process of secularization and reform continues at a rapid rate also in Egypt and Persia.

(24) V. V. Barthold, *op, cit.*, 133

NATURE OF THE ISLAMIC STATE

—MAJID KHADDURI

EVER since the word *theocracy* was coined by Flavi Josephus (A.D. 37-100) to characterise the type of t Israelite state which existed in the first century of t Christian era, the term has gained currency among publici and was applied to all states governed by religious codes states whose religious and political institutions presented unity.[1] The Islamic state was no exception to the rule a therefore, has been classified, from the point of view of t incidence and exercise of authority, as a theocracy.[2] careful examination of the nature of the Islamic state sho however, that it was not a theocratic state but falls under different category of states. The writer has briefly touch on this point elsewhere,[3] but it is possible now, within t space allowed in this review, to treat the subject mo adequately.

I

The principles of Muḥammad's (P.B.O.H.) ideal state a to be found in the Qur'ān [which he probably contemplat

(1) See J.C, Bluntschli, *Allgemeine Statslehre* (Stuttgart, 1875). pp. 3 397-399 ; Fritz Kern, *Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages*, tra S.B. Chrines, (Oxford, 1939), pp. 27-34; F.G. Wilson, T *Elements of Modern Politics*. (New York, 1936), pp. 87-88.

(2) See J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, trans. M. Weir, (Calcutta, 1927), pp. 5, 8. T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching Islam*, (3rd ed., London, 1935), p. 32; Muhammad Hamidull *Muslim Conduct of State*, (Lahore, 1945), pp. 74, 180.

(3) See my *Law of War and Peace in Islam*. (London, 1941), pp. 6-7.

had he lived longer, to translate into a reality.][4] It is true that the term state (*dawlah*) is neither used in the Qur'ān nor was it in vogue at Muḥammad's time, but the essential elements that constitute a state were referred to in the Qurān which clearly indicate that the concept, if not the term state, was specifically meant in the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān often refers to organized authority, divine and unlimited, which belongs to *Allah*.[5] The sovereignty of the Islamic state resides, therefore, with *Allah*. The exercise of that ultimate authority or sovereignty was delegated to the Prophet Muḥammad, or *Allah's* vicegerent on earth, who was instructed to rule with justice.[6] *Allah*, accordingly, was regarded in Islam as the [*titular*] *head*, not the direct ruler or king of the Islamic state, while His vicegerent on earth was advised to rule in accordance with divine laws communicated to him in the form of *commands*. The citizens of the Islamic state were *Allah's* subjects (عباد الله), and its laws were divine laws, because they emanated from *Allah*, not enacted or legislated by man. Divine law, as such, is infallible and man can only obey, because *Allah* knows better than any other authority what His ignorant subjects need. In his attempt to consummate his obedienc to law, man realises

(4) Very few publicists have argued that Muhammad's mission, like that of Christ, aimed at the propagation of a new faith rather than the setting up of a state. See Ali Abd-ul-Raziq, *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm*, (Cairo, 1925), pp. 64–89. For criticism of Raziq's theory, see A. Sanhoury, *Le Califat*, (Paris, 1926), pp. 45–48.

(5) Qur'an; XXIX, 75; CXIV, 2–3.

(6) Qur'an; XXXVIII, 25. "O David! verily We have made thee Our vicegerent upon earth. Judge therefore between men with truth, and follow not the passion, lest they cause thee to err from the way of *Allah*..." States have crumbled to pieces because its rulers have failed to abide by the divine law. Moses and his brother went to Pharaoh because he "transgressed (the bounds of law)," and had become a "tyrant in the land." (Qur'an: V, 84; XX. 25). See H.K. Sherwani, "The Origin of Islamic Polity," *Islamic Culture*, Vol. X, (October, 1936), p. 538.

his religious ideal. Law in Islam, accordingly, has the character of a religious obligation; at the same time it constitutes a political sanction of religion.[7]

Upon the death of Muḥammad (P B O.H.), communication with *Allah* became impossible. because there was no other Prophet and Muḥammad was the last, "the seal of the Prophets." [8] It was tacitly understood by the Muslims, however, that *Allah* had delegated the exercise of His sovereignty, after the death of Muḥammad, to the Muslim community, which immediately elected a successor to Muḥammad, not in the capacity of a prophet but as a *caliph*, or successor, to Muḥammad's position as a vicegerent of *Allah*. In theory, therefore, sovereignty, as the ultimate divine authority in Islam, remained in *Allah's* hands, but its exercise was delegated to the people of the Islamic state. In practice, however, the caliphate, which was inherently an elective position, had become virtually hereditary, though consent (bai'a البيعة) of the people was required for every new caliph [9]

(7) M. Khadduri, *Law of War and Peace in Islam*. pp 7-8,9-10; Abdur Rahim, *The Principles of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, (Madras, 1911), pp 48 ff; N.P. Aghnides, *Mohammadan Theories of Finance*, (New York, 1916), pp 23-29; D.B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, (New York, 1903), pp. 65 ff, I Goldziher, *Le Dogme et la loi de L'Islam*, (Paris, 1920), pp. 27 ff.

(8) Qur'ān, XXXIII, 40.

(9) Practice had much deviated from theory in the exercise of the caliphate. The caliphs indeed had monopolised all the powers of Caesar, and some of them, in the Abbasid period, even claimed that they directly represented *Allah* on earth. On the origins and use of the divine rights of the caliphs, see Ignaz Goldziher "Ombre de dieu, Khalife de dieu," *Reveue de l'Histoire des Religions*, Vol. XXV (1897), pp 331-338. See also Ibn Jama'a *Tahrir al-Ahkam fi Tadbir Ahl al-Islam* in *Islamica*, (1934), Vol. VI, pp. 353-356.

II

COULD SUCH A STATE BE CALLED A THEOCRACY?

Any definition of the term "state" should take into consideration the incidence and exercise of political authority as a criterion of its nature and character. A state is called monarchical or oligarchical (in the Aristotelian sense), if its ultimate authority is entrusted, by force or reason, to one or the few; it is democratic, if ultimate authority is regarded flowing from, and by the consent of, the people. A state is *theocratic* if it "claims to be governed by a god or gods."[10] The *Oxford Dictionary* defines it as "a form of government in which God (or a deity) is recognised as the king or immediate ruler."[11]

In its origin the term theocracy was coined by Flavius Josephus to characterise the type of the Israelite state which existed in the first century of the Christian era.[12] Tailliar is of the opinion that Judaism, Christianity and Islam were all theocracies[13] Wellhausen, however, maintains that Jewish theocracy existed only in theory, that is, an

---

(10) C. Ryder Smith, "Theocracy," *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, pp. 287–289.

(11) See also Georg Jellinck, *Allgemeine Statslehre*. (3rd ed., Berlin, 1919), p. 289.

(12) "There are innumerable differences," says Josephus, "in the particular customs and laws that are among mankind; some have entrusted the power of their states to monarchies, some to oligarchies, and some to democracies; but our legislator had no regard to any of these forms, but ordered our government to be what I may call by a strained expression a *theocracy*, attributing the power and the authority to God" [translated from the Greek and cited by J. Wellhausen *Prolegmena to the History of Israel*, trans. R.F. Black and A. Menzies (Edinburgh, 1885), p. 411 n.]

(13) M. Tailliar, *Essia sur l'History des Institutions de Principaux Peuples*, (Douai, 1843); *Precis de l'histoire des Institutions de l'Europe Occidentale an Moyen-Age*, (Saint Omer, 1845), passim.

ideal representation at the time of Jewish decline.[14] Christianity, on the other hand, was not originally associated with politics, since Jesus Christ had declared "My kingdom is not of this World."[15] From the time of St. Paul to that of Emperor Constantine, the tradition was laid down in Christianity that every power possessing authority in the state ought to be recognised as a divinely ordained authority.[16] When the state adopted Christianity the sanction of the Church became necessary for political authority, and the aim of the state had become, in the words of Kern, to "put God's law into practice."[17] At that stage Christianity and the state had come so nearer to one another that the Christian religion had rather become Christendom.[18]

It is to be noted that God (*Allah*) has never been regarded, as stated above, the *immediate* ruler in Judaism, Christianity or Islam; only his representatives on earth were the real executives. It was therefore the *divine law*, or the sacred code, regarded as the source of governing authority,

(14) "In Ancient Israel," says Wellhausen, "the theocracy never existed in fact as a form of constitution. The rule of Jehovah is here an ideal representation; only after the exile was it attempted to realise in it the shape of a Rule of the Holy with outward means." (J. Wellhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 411).

(15) John, XVIII, 36. His kingdom," says Tellenbach, "was a supernatural power working in the World and remaining for all others a matter of hope and expectation. Out of Christ's attitude to the world, there arose among the early Christians a tendency to withdraw from temporal affairs and to concentrate on the kingdom of Heaven," [Gerd Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society at the time of the Investitute Contest*, trans. R.F. Bennet. (Oxford, 1940), p. 25].

(16) Math. XVII, 21: "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's." See also Fritz Kern, *op. cit.*, p. 27,

(17) Fritz Kern, *op. cit.*, p. 28. See also Tellenbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

(18) The principal Biblical verses for the so-called theocratic idea in Christendom are: Mark; IX, 35 X, 42; XX, 26 sq; Luke; XXII, 26.

which was the essential feature in the process of control under such systems. This is what we call a ***divine nomocracy.*** The ***Oxford Dictionary*** defines it as "a system of government based on a legal code; the rule of law in a community." "Nomocracy," says Quincy Wright, "exists if a supreme law regarded as of divine or natural origin is the source of governing authority."[19] In Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the immediate rulers were not regarded as legislators, but were together with their subjects, bound by the divine law. The *Sharī'a*, or the sacred code, was the source of the governing authority; only its execution was entrusted to the Prophet or his successors [20]

III

Christendom and Islam may be regarded as universal nomocratic states, while Judaism was a parochial nomocratic state. Christianity and Islam, it is true, had emerged in countries dominated by parochial traditions and local particularism, but they arose in protest to these conditions and, accordingly adopted universal concepts and ideals current in the Hellenistic World. For the trend of thought since Alexander the Great advocated his revolutionary ideas of "the unity of Mankind"[21] began gradually to turn from

(19) Quincy Wright, *A Study of War*, (Chicago, 1942), Vol. II, p. 968.

(20) Theocracy exists only where God is regarded as the immediate ruler. At present it exists where the *Lama* rules (in Tibet) or, under Shintoism, in Japan. See D C. Holtom, *The Political Philosophy of Modern Shinto*, (Chicago. 1922).

(21) See W.W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind.* Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. XIX. London: Humphrey Milford, 1933. See also T.J. Haarhoff, "Alexander's Dream: The Unity of Mankind," *The Contemporary Review*. (July, 1942), pp. 48-50

parochial to universal values.[22] The Stoics carried further Alexander's ideas and expressed their philosophy in terms of universal concepts and values. The Romans translated Alexander's ideas and the Stoics' philosophy into an organised system of life.[23] Both Christianity and Islam developed under the impact of these ideas. Thus Islam was bound to be a universal religion and, especially after the great Arab conquest, the Muslims became completely Hellenised.[24] Judaism, which appeared and developed before such concepts were accepted, was naturally parochial and the Jews were regarded as God's chosen people ; their state, therefore, was national and not a universal state.

The universality of Islam, as preached by the Prophet Muḥammad did not necessarily carry with it the conception of a universal or world-state. But the legal prerequisites were already existing, such as the universal conception of religion, equality of races before *Allah* and law, and common allegiance to one head of the state. Thus in theory, as well as in practice, Islam presented a type of a universal nomocratic state since the Abbasid period

---

(22) Alexander may have been influenced by Buddhism or may have had developed his ideas independently under the influence of the practical considerations of his great military achievements which he thought could only be maintained by the unity of the various races in his new Empire. *Cf.* Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, (London, 1939), Vol. I, p. 86.

(23) Ernest Barker, ' The Conception of Empire," in Cyril Bailey (ed.), *The Legacy of Rome*, (Oxford, 1923), pp. 46, 51–54. It was the policy of the Roman Senate to confer Roman citizenship upon the conquered populations and to incorporate their territories into the Roman World Empire. See speech of Claudius in the Senate in, Tacitus *The Annals*, (Everyman's ed., 1934) pp. 306–307.

(24) For the controversy whether Islam was preached by the Prophet as a national or universal religion, see my *Law of War and Peace in Islam*, pp. 4–6.

The universal nomocracy of Islam, like the *Republica Christiana* in the West, asssumed mankind to constitute one community, bound by one law and governed by one rule.[25] The nature of such a state is entirely exclusive; it does not recognise, by definition, the co-existence of a second universal state. It is true that Islam tolerated Christianity as a religion, but Christendom, as a universal state, was always, in the words of H.A.R. Gibb, "The sworn foe of Islam."[26]

The Islamic nomocracy, however, in contrast to the *Republica Christiana*, presented, in its legal theory at least, a real unity in the religious and political aspects of the state. Thus the Islamic state spared itself the internal conflict between Church and State which was so characteristic between the Pope and the Emperor.[27] The caliph in Islam was the head of both the Church and the State, as one institution monopolising, at the same time, all the powers of Caesar.[28]

(25) Qur'an, XXI, 23 "If there were two gods, the universe would be ruined." But see M. Hamidullah *Muslim Conduct of State*, (Lahore, 1945), p. 74.

(26) H.A.R Gibb, (ed.), *Whither Islam*, (London, 132), p. 24.

(27) In Christendom the spiritual and the temporal rulers were separate authorities. There were three theories as to the relation between the spiritual (The Pope) and the temporal (The Emperor) powers. The first advocated the necessary superiority of the spiritual over the temporal powers; the second, the superiority of the temporal and the third the equality of the two powers. Even the extreme papal party admitted in practice the principle of the separation of powers. See Otto Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, trans. F.W. Maitland, (Cambridge, 1900), p. 12.

(28) Al-Mawardi, *Kitab al Ahkam al Sultaniyah*, (Cairo, 1909). pp. 3, 4; T.W. Arnold, *The Caliphate*, (Oxford, 1924), pp. 47–49; H.K. Sherwani, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration*, (Lahore, 1945), pp. 117–120.

SOME ASPECTS OF ISLAMIC POLITICAL THOUGHT

—Erwin I.T. Rosenthal

ISLAM as a way of life expresses itself in the *Shari'a*, the revealed law based upon the *Qur'ān*, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad and the *Ḥadith*, the body of authentic traditions. The authoritative interpretation of the *Shari'a* is contained in the *Fiqh*, arrived at by the *'Ijmā*, consensus of the jurists as the authoritative representatives of the *Jamā'a*, the Muslim community.

An independent political theory cannot, therefore, be expected in Islam. But constitutional law forms a necessary part of every exposition of *Fiqh*. This constitutional law presupposes the existence of the state within which the earthly life of the *Jamā'a* runs its course, in preparation for the other world, for the life to come. In the Muslim state supreme authority, temporal as well as spiritual, is vested in the Khalīfa, the vicegerent of the Prophet of *Allah*.

As far as the Islamic state is concerned, the jurists never ask themselves the question whether a state must be, nor how it originates. It is, and its function is to guarantee the maintenance of pure Islam, the application of its Law, the *Shari'a* and the defence of orthodoxy against heresy. Rights and duties of the caliph are clearly defined and laid down by the *Ijmā'* of the jurists of Sunnitic Islam. With schism raising its head soon after the death of Muḥammad, who made no provision for his successor as the Commander of the Faithful, the problem of lawful succession to the *Khilāfah* was very pressing and serious. Apart from strictly theological divisions and controversies, it was principally the theory and practice of the *Khilāfah* which divided orthodox from heterodox Islam with its many sects

For the purpose of this paper, we must confine ourselves to a brief consideration of the theory of the *Khilāfah* in orthodox Islam. We follow, as the representative exposition, what al-Māwardi laid down in his *Al-Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyah* (*Ordinances of Government*)[1], a treatise devoted to constitutional and administrative law. Professor Gibb[2] has made it abundantly clear that this work is anything but an academic exposition of the theory of Government according to the *Sharī'a*. It is rather an attempt at vindicating the orthodox position in the light of contemporary events and at re-asserting the claim of the caliph to spiritual and temporal overlordship against Sunnite no less than Shi'ite conquerors and rulers of Muslim territories within his realm. The authority of Muslim law had to be upheld against princes and generals who, by brute force, had established their own authority over parts of the Abbasid Empire. An orthodox Muslim could not submit to an authority other than that conferred by the *Jamā'a* upon the lawful caliph. And yet, he could not deny that in reality neither the caliph nor even the *Jamā'a* were at times unable to assert this authority which was alone recognised by law. Nor, could he overlook the *de facto* authority and effective power and control of these rulers. If, however, the conquerors acknowledged the supreme authority of the Abbasid Caliph in matters spiritual and temporal by mentioning his name in prayer and by entering into a contract with him, their rule was legalised inasmuch as it rested upon delegated authority. Thus, the unity of the community of the Faithful was preserved. The legal

(1) Edited by Enger, Bonn. 1853. *See* also French translation by Count Leon Ostrorag, Paris, 1901 with a general introduction to Islamic Political Law.

(2) *See* his succinct analysis al-Mawardi's doctrine in his article *Al-Mawardi's Theory of the Khilafa* published in *Islamic Culture*, XI, 3 (1937), which I have used. The reader might wish to consult al-Mawardi's other treatise on morals, his *k. Adab ad-Dunya wad-Din* edid. O. Rescher.

fiction was maintained, that the Caliph ruled supreme and no conflict of loyalties plagued the *Jamā'a* since the men, who would otherwise be usurpers and rebels, were clothed with the mantle of legality.

Yet, it was not only authority established upon force and conquest that challenged the orthodox political theory of the God-ordained *Khilāfa*. As is well known, under the influence of Greek and Hellenistic philosophy, Reason claimed the right to inquire into the laws of Politics. The philosophers wanted to know, by independent rational inquiry, why should there be a state and what was its purpose. Whilst they did not deny that the Islamic state was the outcome of Revelation, they averred at the same time that Reason necessitated it just as much. Likewise, they admitted that the *Khalīfah* ought to administer the state in such a way that the purpose of the Law would be fulfilled, *i e.*, to improve the Faithful by watching over their right conduct so that they, in turn, helped, as moral beings, to maintain the state and that they prepared themselves in the moral state for the world to come. Yet, the *Falāsifa* insisted not only on perfection in morals but demanded perfection in knowledge and understanding as well. This threefold perfection was to them the indispensable condition for the *imitatio Dei* as the ultimate goal of the individual person.

Al-Māwardī's statement that the institution of *Imām—Imāmah* equals *Khilāfa—is* required by revealed law (*Shara'*) not, as some profess, by Reason (*'aql*), is clearly directed against the *Mu'tazila* but no doubt also against the *Falāsifa* generally. The basis for his claim is to be found in three passages in the Qur'ān (*Sura* II, 28; IV, 62 and XXXVIII, 25). The last-named is specially significant in that the *Khalīfah* is not only to judge truthfully but that David is chosen and not Moses. This may suggest that David here stands for the highest temporal authority : the *Khalīfah*, as the successor of the Prophet, is, at the same time also the successor of David

as king and judge. He is *to defend the Faith and to administer this world.* Al-Māwardī goes on to stress the superiority of the Revealed Law over Reason. For Reason demands government against lawlessness and anarchy and the wise guards himself against strife and discord being guided by his own reason. But Revealed Law has bestowed temporal authority upon him to whom it has delegated spiritual power. *We are therefore obliged to obey those Imāms who rule over us.*

Properly-qualified persons elect from among the properly-qualified candidates the one who is most suitable to fill the vacancy created by the death or the disqualification of the reigning caliph. One of these conditions enjoins knowledge of the relevant qualities which *Fiqh* has laid down for the caliph. This was probably in actual fact even more often absent than *'adalah* in the elector.

Of the seven qualifications a candidate must possess the first is *'adalah* and the second is knowledge (*'ilm)* which enables him to make independent decisions and pass judgments on points of Law *(ijtihād)*. This was, in practice, left to the *mujtahids*, the professional jurists, and to the *muqallids*, their successors. Moreover, the caliph must possess physical health and must be capable of discharging his duties which comprise governing his subjects and directing the affairs of state in person. Besides, he must have courage and determination to protect the territory of Islam and to wage the holy War *(jihād)*. Finally, he must be a descendant of the *Quraish.*[3]

---

(3) *Cp.* Ibn Khaldūn's treatment in his *Muqaddima*, (Beyrut, 1879), pp. 168/71 which is based on Al-Māwardi's exposition but elaborates greatly on the last condition. *See* also my *Ibn Khaldun's Gedanken uber den Staat. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Staatslehre.* (*Beiheft, 25, of the Historische Zeitschrift*), 1932, Munchen/Berlin., esp. chapter on *State and Law*, pp. 648.

The election is completed by a contract, voluntarily entered into, without force or constraint.

If there are two equally-qualified candidates the electors choose according to the exigencies of the times. At the time of external danger and of political upheaval, preference is given to the courageous one; if the times are quiet they prefer the learned candidate who is capable of putting down heresy and of upholding the Faith.

Once elected the caliph has to safeguard Islam in conformity with the *ijma'* of the *Jamā'a*. He must see that justice is being done. He must restrain the strong and protect the weak. He must nominate the right persons for the offices of the state, must take personal interest in the administration. Though he can delegate authority the responsibility is ultimately his.

It is clear from the foregoing that, according to the orthodox view, the spiritual and temporal powers are united in the person of the caliph. His chief task is to create the conditions necessary for the full working of the *Sharī'a* which aims at the willing submission of the entire Muslim community as well as of the individual to the supreme will of Allah Whom to serve means right-doing.

This ideal was rarely attained. Yet, this should not detract from its intrinsic value as a fully-developed Theocracy. And even if it only lived on as a fiction it is precisely this fiction which has saved Islam from the ruinous struggle between Papacy and State in the west and from disintegration with the extinction of the caliphate.

II

Siyāsa, government, in the orthodox view is conditioned by the *Sharī'a* and the 'Defender of the Faith' has to be guided by the moral obligations of the *Sharī'a* in his execu-

tion of the duties of government. But *siyāsa* can also be understood in a secular sense as political government and administration executed by a ruler who, be he Muslim or not, is actuated by the will for power. He claims authority as the man who holds power in his hands. His problem is *how* to govern. The Persians have given much attention to this question and have treated of it in the so-called "Mirrors for princes and magistrates." It is only natural that Muslim writers should have taken up this literary form. One of them is relevant to our purpose. He is Ibn aṭ-Tiqṭaqa who wrote in 1302 a book for him *who governs the people and directs the affairs*. The treatise is dedicated to the ruler of Mossul after whom it is called *k. al-Fakhrī*.[4] It was the intention of the author neither to discourse on the origin of the royal dignity and its essence nor on its division into religious and secular authority, nor was he concerned with what is in agreement with the requirements of the Revealed Law and what is not, but rather to treat of *the principles of government and rules of conduct (ādāb) from which one derives advantage in happenings and events, in the government of the subjects, in the protection of the kingdom and in the improvement of morals and conduct.* It goes without saying that the *Khilāfah*, conditioned by the *Sharī'a*, is outside the purview of Ibn aṭ-Tiqṭaqa. He is concerned with the kingdom (*mulk*), its ruler and his subjects. But even so, the tasks of both kinds of institutions are, on the whole, the same: political and moral concerns, with this difference that the *malik* is not called upon to defend the Faith—this is the duty and the privilege of the *Khalīfah*—whose sovereignty the *Amir* of Mossul, theoretically at least, recognises nor does he look upon the inhabitants of the kingdom as the community of the Faithful. They represent

(4) Edited by Ahlwardt and more recently anew by H. Derenbourg, Paris. Ibn Miskawaih does not contain anything new beyond Ibn at-Tiqtaqa. His ethical treatise *k. Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* contains some interesting remarks on social obligations of the individual which have a 'political' colouring.

for him the king's subjects rather than the servants of Allah. He likens the relationship between the ruler and the subjects to that between the physician and the patients rather than to between the despot and the slaves. The successful government—both from the point of view of political success in terms of power and influence and from that of the improvement of morals—depends on the character and ability of the ruler. All his actions must be directed by the best interests of the state. He must possess intelligence (*'aql) through which empires are governed;* justice *('adl)* to ensure prosperity and sound finances as well as the good conduct of men; knowledge enabling him to converse with the scholars—a social accomplishment and a means to attract to his court savants and poets rather than a political qualification. Ibn at-Ṭiqṭaqā also mentions *the fear of God as a quality which is the root of all good and the key to every blessing, for if the king fears Allah the servants of Allah have confidence in him.* Here we see clearly the political importance and usefulness of religion, an idea greatly expanded in Ibn Khaldūn[5] and strongly reminiscent of Machiavelli. Next we would mention *Fear and Respect through which the order of the kingdom is preserved and guarded against the ambition of the subjects.* The prince must also be versed in the art of government (*siyāsa*) which is *the capital of the king. On it he relies in order to maintain (sound) finances, to preserve morals, to prevent evil, to subjugate wrong-doers and to forestall injustice which leads to civil war and rebellion.*

The man so gifted has the duty to protect the country to ensure the fortification of the frontiers and the security of the roads. In return, he is entitled to the obedience of his subjects. Strict justice and impartiality, the protection of the weak and humble against injustice as well as the assistance

(5) *See* my *Ibn Khaldun's Gedanken, etc., loc. cit.,* chapter *State and Religion,* p. 50 ff. Beyrut edition, pp. 137/9; 176/8; 180/1; 190; and *State and Law,* Beyrut, 165/6; 109/11.

equally of those near to and far away from him—all these are essential duties of the good ruler.

The qualities requried of a successful ruler form the subject of the first part of the *k. al-Fakhrī*. The second and main part of the author's *History of Dynasties* describes the reign and administration of caliphs, sultans, emirs, governors and wazirs and there are but few signs of originality. But now and again a lively interest in politics can be detected. The principles laid down for good and successful government are, no doubt, at least partially derived from observation of actual historical events and of the reaction of rulers to them. These rulers are being judged by their success or failure to meet contingencies. Their political ability is the author's primary concern. And yet, the *Sharī'a* with the *Khilāfa* as the institution to implement it, was a living reality for Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqā no less than for any and every Muslim. Its superiority over man-made *mulk* was self-evident. But it was an ideal far removed from political reality. And it is just *this political reality with which he is concerned. It is* immaterial whether the ethical trend of his political thought is due to his Islamic environment and to his Muslim faith or rather to the influence of the philosophers : the Power-State and successful government form the object of his study, the subject of his advice to rulers and the content of his treatise. His intention was to supply rulers with a guide for the business of government. To probe into the foundations of the state, its origin and development was outside his interest.

That the *Falāsifa* touch on this side of Political Philosophy is equally due not so much to a genuine interest as to the fact that their Greek masters Plato and Aristotle are vitally concerned about these matters. It is more by way of transmission of Platonic thought in particular and in commenting upon it than by way of an independent inquiry that this topic is dealt with in Muslim philosophy of east and west. It was, in fact, left to Ibn Khaldūn to evolve a

political philosophy properly so called within the framework of a philosophy of History.

III

The *Falāsifa* occupy a peculiar position in the realm of Political Thought. This position might be delineated as intermediary between the theological-juristic treatment of the State on the basis of the Divinely Revealed Law and the historical-political approach as the result of the study of the actual State built upon Power. It cannot, however, be stressed too emphatically that, from whatever angle the writers approach the problem of government, they are all Muslims and they are all convinced of the superiority of the Ideal Islamic State as envisaged and demanded by the *Sharī'a* over all other states, even over Plato's Ideal State, his *Republic*. As educated Muslims they are all trained in the science of *Fiqh* and the other disciplines of Islamic culture. Some were practising judges, professional jurists. This is of importance in the case of the philosophers in particular since they are—though primarily interested in the individual soul and its perfection—at least in their political conceptions guided by the central idea of Law on the one hand and of the individual as a citizen of a state founded on and guided and directed by Law on the other. This Law—be it revealed or laid down by the wise—has universal validity and absolute authority. With the notable exception of two of the western *Falāsifa*, Ibn Bājja and Ibn Ṭufail, highest perfection of the individual is possible only in the state. Just as Plato's philosopher attains happiness only in the Ideal *Politeia* so Averroes'—and before Alfārābī's—adept of the speculative sciences gains ultimate perfection and happiness only in the perfectly led and administered Ideal State which is ruled over by the philosopher-king who is identical with the Lawgiver and *Imām*.

It is not possible to deal with the most important *Falāsifa* extensively in this short survey. We must confine

ourselves to Ibn Rushd, the disciple of Alfārābī[6] and Ibn Bājja. Alfārābī, 'the second teacher,' was influenced by *Politeia* and *Nomoi* and as a result wrote two political treatises, *Madina Fāḍila* and *k. al-Siyāsāt*, also called *k. al-Mabādi.* Averroes states in the beginning of his *Paraphrase* of Plato's *Politeia* that he had not come across Aristotle's *politics* and had consequently to comment on the *Politeia* as the second, practical part to the first theoretical part of the foremost of all arts, Politics.[7] The theoretical part is contained in Aristotle's *Nicomachian Ethics.*[8] Both stand in the same relationship to each other as do in Medicine the *Book of Health and Illness* to that of *Maintenance of Health and Removal of Illness*. The principle of the practical science of Politics is Will and Choice, its subjects are the things of the will dependent on our action. In his *Commentary* on the *Nicomachian Ethics,* Averroes defines Virtue as the purpose of Politics (*Hahanhagah ham-Medīniṯ*). The highest Good, peculiar to man is—according to another of Averroes' statement—the activity of the national soul demanded by Virtue. This is, however, possible in the perfect state only. He makes it quite clear—as he likewise does in the *Paraphrase*—that highest intellectual perfection is possible only in the Ideal State. Man is, therefore, a part of the State, he cannot live without it and he must contribute his share to its maintenance and functioning in his own as well as in the interests of the citizens as a whole. To be a citizen is part

(6) *See* my *Maimonides Conception of State and society* in *Moses Maimonides*, ed. I. Epstein, London, 1935, where this point is dealt with and also the indebtedness of Averroes to Alfārābi. Further, *cp.* my *Politisch Gedanken bei Ibn Bajja* (*MGWJ*, 1937, Festschrift for Prof. E. Mittwoch) where Averroes' attitude to Ibn Bajja is fully discussed.

(7) *See* my *Averroes' Paraphrase on Plato's "Politeia," JRAS*, Oct., 1934. Quotations from the *Paraphrase* in the subsequent pages are based upon the text which is now being finally prepared for publication from seven Hebrew MSS.

(8) I have used the Bodleian MS. (Mich, 277). The quotations are to be found on pp. 23b, 30a.

of the purpose of man. This undoubtedly goes beyond the commonly-made assertion that man is a *zoon politikon*. For whilst all the *Falāsifa* agree that man cannot exist by himself —he needs help and support to obtain food, clothing and dwelling—this only means that man must join with others and form a society built upon the principle of mutual help to obtain the necessities of life. However, it does not explain the necessity of the state. Man's faculties are manifold, so are his needs. In order to provide for all, leadership and organisation are necessary so that everyone does that for which he is best fitted by nature. Averroes accepts Plato's plea for one activity for each person. If the state is to fulfil its purpose of guaranteeing man's welfare and happiness, it must provide facilities for the development of man's faculties, the material as well as the spiritual ones. Man is gifted with Reason and his aim is to reach happiness with the help of his reasoning faculty. If the state were nothing but the provider of the material needs of man and the protector of life and property against the superior force of the stronger, then man would never reach his goal. This goal is, according to Aristotle, the perception of all existing things in a state of blissful contemplation, or according to the *Falāsifa* a stage higher even than the perception of God. We cannot here enter into a discussion of the various stages of that perception until, especially among the Jewish thinkers, this knowledge of God is extended to the Love of God expressed in a never-ending striving to become like God as much as is humanly possible through the conscious imitation of His ways. We are here exclusively concerned with the bearing which this striving for personal happiness of the rational soul has on the state. It is clearly not sufficient that there exists any kind of stage. For, the success or failure of man's striving to attain his goal depends—at least in the view of Averroes—entirely upon the right kind of state. The perfect state as envisaged in the *Sharī'a* has—philosophically speaking—its equivalent in the Ideal state of Plato. Both are conditioned by a universally binding, valid and authoritative Ideal Law. The

state which Plato wants to establish is built on the Law which the philosophers, the wise, have devised. Averroes, as a skilled jurist and a keen observer of the Islamic states of his time, stresses the extreme difficulty of such an undertaking. He underlines it, moreover, by emphasising how it is indispensable for the king to possess perfect intelligence and the full knowledge contained in the speculative sciences. The ideal ruler is—to repeat it—not only wise in that his intellect is perfect, is ever ready to concentrate upon perceiving the *Intelligibilia*. He is also the Lawgiver. Now, we find in *Maimonides* the equation between philosopher and prophet, based upon Alfārābī. He is a prophet whose intellect and imagination have both received the full force of the emanation of the *Active* Intellect. If that emanation is confined to the intellect alone the result is a Lawgiver. Averroes is doubtful whether the ideal ruler must possess the gift of prophecy. He assigns this matter of serious deliberation a place in the first part of Political Science. That he was familiar with Alfārābī's theory of prophecy is evident. His equation of the philosopher-king with the Lawgiver and *Imām* is literally taken over from Alfārābī as we know from the latter's *k. Taḥsil as-Sa'ādah.*[9] All depends therefore on the correct interpretation of *Imām* which the Hebrew translator of Averroes' *Paraphrase* renders by *kohen*. The Hebrew text is corrupt. But its meaning can be gathered from Alfārābī's just referred to *k. Taḥsil as-Sa'ādah.*[10] *Imām is he whom one follows as chief.* In its technical sense, we know it denotes the leader in the communal prayer behind whom one prays. The question arises whether Averroes has substituted prophet by *Imām* whilst modifying Alfārābī's conception of prophecy? Does he consequently imply that Plato's philosopher-king is—translated into Islamic terminology and adapted to Islamic conditions—identical with the *Khalīfah* one of whose principal functions is to act

(9) Edition, Hyderabad, 1345 A.H. p. 43.

(10) Dr. Paul Kraus has, at the time, ingeniously recognised the original Arabic version, since confirmed by the Alfārābī's passage (*see* previous note). *Cp.* also *above*, p. 9.

as *Imām* in the Friday-prayer? If this were so, Averroes would still be within the orthodox political conception even though he stresses the intellectual and ethical qualifications of the ideal ruler and passes over in silence any religious duties of the head of the state. Moreover, in his discussion of the aim and purpose of man—without which he considers education for citizenship to be futile and useless—Averroes reviews the various opinions held on this subject. As behoves a Muslim he first states the aim to be the will of God as postulated by the religious laws in force in his own time. But he goes on to declare that the perception of this divine will is possible through prophecy only. The will of God demands a twofold effort on the part of man. First comes the acquisition of *abstract knowledge alone like the knowledge of God commanded by our Law* and then action required by Ethics. He avers that both postulates, *i.e.*, that of religious law and that of philosophy, are identical in character and purpose.

If we had to define the common ground between Islam and Platonic political philosophy which alone enabled the *Falāsifa* especially Averroes to insist on this identity of purpose, we would call this basis nomocracy. And this in spite of the emphasis Averroes lays on the monarchy (kingship) as the ideal constitution, followed closely by aristocracy. The former is conditioned by Islamic history which forms the background of Averroes' experience and supplies him with examples for his illustrations to Plato's ideas and arguments. The latter is due to the fact that the *Paraphrase* is an interpretation of Plato's *Politeia*, supplemented by the *Nomoi*, and by Aristotle's *Nicomachia*. The two last-named works were commented upon by Alfārābī already.

Whilst thus the ideal state in the orthodox view is a theocracy, the emphasis of the *Falāsifa* shifts to the *Nomos* and their ideal state is a nomocracy. It is, indeed, the central place of law in Islam as well as in Greek political philosophy as understood by the *Falāsifa* which has made possible the reception

of Aristotelian and Platonic ideas in Muslim philosophical thought. The connexion between political leadership and law is very close. In his *Commentary* on the *Nicomachia* Averroes stresses that the *mudabbir* is concerned about Virtue to the exclusion almost of everything else. It is the leader's desire and will to make the citizens *good, excellent and submissively bent under the laws*. In another passage he discusses the functions of the *absolute ruler* who is in the first place *the guardian of equity. And when he guards equity he guards justice. Political equity is identical with legal equity*. This last-mentioned comment shows the close affinity of Politics and Law in the thought of Averroes. Plato no less than Aristotle was his teacher whose theories could not fail to strike home with a professional Muslim jurist. Another remark in this *Commentary* illustrates this: *Political equity is partly* (of the realm of) *natural law partly* (of that of) *human law*.[11]

Next to moral leadership, wisdom as a 'political' virtue is linked to the realm of law. Averroes interprets Plato's wise *polis* which possesses knowledge and wisdom as a state whose *wise citizens thoroughly understand all the laws and statutes*. This equals good government and good counsel for which knowledge of the speculative sciences is required. Thus, he says: *Good Government and good counsel are undoubtedly a kind of knowledge, only we cannot say that this city-state possesses good government and good counsel on account of wisdom in the practical arts such as agriculture, carpentry and others. If this be so, then it possesses wisdom only in that knowledge which we will set forth (i.e.*, theoretical knowledge of the speculative sciences). *It is evident that this wisdom can anly be achieved through knowledge of the human aim since this government tends in that direction. It is likewise evident that we understand the human aim only through the speculative sciences. Thus, this city-state is necessarily... wise in two* (kinds of) *knowledge simultaneously, i.e., practical and theoretical knowledge. Consequently, this wisdom will be*

(11) *Loc. cit.*, pp. 38a, 98a, b.

found in the smallest part of the city-state among the philosophers. The reason is that these (philosophical) *natures do exist much less frequently than the other natures, the artisans. It is obvious that this wisdom fittingly persists in the leaders of the city-state who rule over it. If this be so, then the leaders of the city-state are necessarily the wise.* The qualification of knowledge (*'ilm*) which the *khālifah* must possess is thus interpreted in the Platonic sense. Likewise, Averroes has no difficulty to square the law of the *Shari'a* with the law as laid down by the philosophers in the ideal *Republic.* He distinguishes between general laws of a normative character and particular laws which the citizens can easily derive from the general (and authoritative, valid) laws. Such *partial laws and good moral instructions like to honour one's parents, to keep silence before adults* the citizens will, no doubt, evolve themselves *It is therefore not appropriate to lay down laws for such like partial matters because once the general laws are laid down and firmly established the citizens will by their own initiative, proceed towards making those partial laws. For, everybody will only be moved in the direction nature and education move him, if good then good if bad then bad. He, however, who seeks to promulgate these partial laws without having (first) laid down the general laws—as happens to many lawgivers—resembles (the physician) who heals sick persons who, because of their excessive desires, cannot receive any benefit from the remedies with which they are treated.*

Averroes' continual adaptation of Platonic views to Muslim conceptions and Islamic conditions can equally be seen from his comment on Plato's statement about the temples, prayers and sacrifices. He replaces—naturally—the gods by *The Most High and what He commanded through prophecy as if Plato were thinking those were divine matters and should therefore be respected as such in the State.* Averroes further puts the laws *which entrench in the souls humility and glorification of God be He exalted* on a level with all the other laws and injunctions. In his *Commentary* on the *Nicomachia* he expressly states that

these regulations for prayer and sacrifices vary with every nation, religion, time and place.

When Plato distinguishes between instruction by persuasion and by coercion, Averroes draws a parallel with the *Sharī'a* which enjoins persuasion and war as the two ways leading to God. In general, it is worth noting that Averroes is primarily interested in the practical problems raised by Plato and he concentrates on the concrete application to existing states and to current political situations rather than on the philosophical discussion of abstract ideas. Needless to say that he abandons the dialogic form of Platonic argumentation, that he replaces Greek poetry by pre-Islamic poetry and that he fully shares the orthodox condemnation of them as harmful. And yet, they are harmful and dangerous from the point of view of the state and citizenship—just like in the *Politeia*—and not from the point of view of Revealed Religion and theological dogma. He is interested in the philosopher as the ideal ruler, the perfect example of the good citizen rather than as a metaphysicist

He shows considerable historical understanding when he takes Galen severely to task for censoring Plato who thinks that a thousand guardians are sufficient and who assigns a certain circumference to the *polis*. He rejoins that Plato wrote for his own time and drew his conclusions on the basis of then prevailing conditions. He would, so Averroes reasons, certainly have revised his views if he had lived at the time of the *Oikoumene*.

The discussion of the imperfect states and of bad constitutions offers Averroes an opportunity to criticise contemporary political institutions and economic and social conditions. Such bad conditions point to the correctness of Plato's views about the guardians, *e.g.*, that they should have no property nor possession any of kind. Or, when he states: *Equity and true belief which are the business of Justice are nothing else than what we said before concerning the government of this city-state. That is, that it is fitting for every citizen to adhere to one civic activity. And*

this is the activity for which he is prepared by nature. Now, this is the equity which bestows upon the city-state salvation and perpetuity as long as there is present in it continuity. If this is so...then equity exists in this city-state in that everyone of its citizens does only that for which he is singled out by nature. This is civic justice just as perversion (of justice) *in states which is the cause of iniquity is nothing else but that everyone of its citizens is trained in more than one thing.* In this connexion Averroes stresses the excellence of Plato's *Republic* and its superiority over the states of his own time in which evils afflict their citizens. He also agrees with Plato in training women like men for *one* occupation and deplores that women in Muslim states are destined for procreation only the more so since they are twice as numerous and would be very useful if engaged in one of the occupations necessary for the existence and preservation of the state. Deeply conscious of the foundation of the just state upon a General Law, Averroes' repeated insistence upon this point of one civic occupation for every citizen, man and woman alike, may be taken as evidence for his admiration for Plato's law of the state. Muslim tradition of the *Khilāfa* and the discrepancy between it and the existing *mulk* in his own day must have sharpened his mind specially to appreciate Plato's plea for justice and equity based upon law in the Ideal State

Here is clearly that common ground which guided the *Falāsifa* in their approach to Greek and Hellenistic political philosophy.

As for Averroes in particular, man interested him as a citizen with duties towards the state. The good citizen serves the community by willingly discharging the allotted duty to the best of his natural ability which is fostered by education. The state ruled by a moral law aiming as it does at the moral perfection of the citizen must afford man the best opportunity for the attainment of his legitimate goal : highest intellectual perfection in the form of the perception of God. Repeatedly, in his *Paraphrase* no less than in his *Commentary* on the *Nicomachia*,

Averroes insists on man being of necessity a citizen. He stresses, against Ibn Bājja, that it would be impossible for man to live without the state.[12] He deprecates the solitary life both from the individual and from the group angle. Just as man cannot attain perfection by segregating himself from the community even in the imperfect state, so can social life not flourish without every citizen sharing in the common tasks of producing the necessities and amenities of life and without contributing to the defence and protection of the state as organised society It is true, Averroes does not deny that it is impossible to attain perfection in an imperfect state, but he denies—equally emphatically—that it is possible even for the metaphysicist to attain perfection outside a political organisation. He has, thus,—as I have stated elsewhere[13]—taken up the main trend of Alfārābī's political thought in deliberate opposition to Ibn Bājja and Ibn Ṭufail who not only maintain that man can rise in a solitary life to the dwindling heights of mystical contemplation of the Divine, but even advocate his segregation. This is a line of thought indicated in Alfārābī under *ṣūfi* influence and developed by the *Ikhwān aṣ Ṣafā*. The *Pure Brethren* are, in turn, greatly indebted to Alfārābī's interpretation of Plato's political ideas and devote a whole chapter of their *Encyclopedia* to the Law and the Lawgiver which they seem to have lifted bodily from Alfārābī's *Madina Fāḍila* (ch. 28). Alfārābī refers to the elect who live in an imperfect community as *strangers*. Ibn Bājja defines, in his *Hanhagat ham-Mitboded* these strangers as men far removed from their surroundings spiritually although they are physically present in the state.[14] Ibn Ṭufail goes a step further and draws the logical conclusion of picturing his hero as a kind of Robinson Crusoe turned speculative mystic. It is to be noted that Ibn Bājja despite his considerable borrowing of Platonic thought and imagery, has divested this material

(12) *Cp.* my *Politisch Gedanken bei Ibn Bajja* loc cit . pp 153/68.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 164f.

(14) *Ibid.*

of its political connotation and relevance. His interest is a purely speculative one. He concentrates on the individual soul seeking union with the Divine through union first with the Active Intellect. Qualities of the ruler, constitutional forms, duties of ruler and ruled are not subjects for his inquiring mind. We find no place allotted to the Law, its educative function and its political relevance. Lacking this central position it does—for Ibn Bājja—not provide the basis and background for man who strives to attain his destiny.[15] The speculative sciences—demanded by the Law according to a notable passage in Averroes' *Paraphrase*—help man in the wise city-state to reach his goal, i.e., to perceive God through self-perception. This is precisely the view of Ibn Bājja who declares that knowledge gained through the speculative sciences leads the striving intellect nearer to God, whose most beloved creature he is. The ideal philosopher must be guided, however, by those laws and statutes which govern the ideal state without, however, being obliged to live in such a political community. And it is merely to illustrate by analogy that Ibn Bājja mentions the perfect state and some of its characteristic features. Averroes, as has been remarked before, will not admit that man can reach perfection and happiness in solitude and he refutes Ibn Bājja's claim that whilst it is easier even for the philosopher to reach his goal in a political organisation, especially in the perfect state after the model of the *Politeia*, this intellectual seeker can achieve happiness in isolation. Ibn Bājja ignores the state when he credits the metaphysicist with striving in constant intellectual endeavour to approximate God implying, however, that the mass of ordinary intellects needs the state in order to realise their intellectual nature. He has not only introduced the west to the mystic trend in Muslim philosophy, he has also undoubtedly sharpened the critical eye of Averroes to perceive clearly the dangers of solitary life

(15) *Ibid.*, pp. 159f; 162, 164/5; 167.

and to understand and repeat with obvious approval the insistence of Aristotle—in the wake of his teacher Plato—that man is a *zōon politikon* and has, as an intellectual person, definite obligations towards the political community.[16]

IV

State and society as phenomena in their own right, subject to laws of their own have only slowly been recognised in a world bound by an all-embracing Law to which every manifestation of the human mind was subjected. It would certainly be tempting to see a deliberate and conscious development from the theological-juristic conception of the Muslim state over the reception (and characteristic adaptation) of Platonic-Aristotelian thought-categories *via* Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqā's unsystematic attempt at historical-political realism to the grandiose political theory of the systematic philosopher of history Ibn Khaldūn. But the time has not yet come to pronounce with any reasonable degree of probability on such a straight line of development in political thought however attractive it may appear to a western mind. The idea must, therefore, be left to further detailed investigation which has to be applied to the whole literature under review and which must never lose sight of the all-important fact that we deal with Muslims for whom Islam offers the ideal solution.

That Ibn Khaldūn has appropriated the whole theological, juridical, philosophical and historical material which the fourteenth century Islam offered is an undisputed fact. How far his sovereign grasp of this weighty tradition can account for his own system is another matter.[17]

(16) *See* my *Averroes Paraphrase*, etc., *loc. cit.*

(17) For full account *see* my *Ibn Khaldun's Gedanken*, etc., *loc. cit.* and also my article in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XXIV, 2, Oct., 1940, under the title: *Ibn Khaldun—A North African Muslim Thinker of the Fourteenth Century.*

It is his original approach to history and to human culture that sets him apart. This approach is new in conception no less than in method and cannot be explained as either a systematic *Thumma* of traditional Islamic doctrine and teaching or as a new attempt to blend Hellenistic science and philosophy with Islamic civilisation. That both have left their indelible mark on his mind and writings goes without saying. That he has emerged as an empiric individual thinker is partly at least due to his training in Aristotelian thinking seen through the eyes of *the* Commentator Averroes. That he could train his observing eye on the historical process as a whole, that he could discover an underlying law in the political and social organism, that he could see the group as well as the individual as a distinct factor in social and political life, all this is unquestionably the result of his strong Arab consciousness and of his intimate knowledge of the political and cultural history of Islam from its foundation to his own day. That he took an active part in moulding history in North Africa as general, judge, diplomatist and scholarly historian and philosopher has given him that valuable experience of the living forces at work in the human group as distinct from the aspirations of the individual soul which enabled him to probe deeply—with rare independence and absence of prejudice—into the causes and motives of political life What strikes the eye of the average observer of the historical process as a composite and very complicated phenomenon which he registers in more or less accurate description,—usually with an axe to grind,—Ibn Khaldūn subjects to the dissecting knife of the impersonal scientist. His aim is to lay bare the various constituent elements which make up human life in group-association. He discovered that the state has a life of its own which is governed by unalterable laws like the human organism. The state has its origin in necessity, it grows out of the free association of like-minded people who are bound together by one common bond, it develops by a

determined effort of the acknowledged leader who gradually changes into an absolute monarch, reaches its climax, inevitably declines and decays. The peak-period of the state is characterised by a flourishing economic life, a high standard of education, by refined manners, a prosperous, yet dignified mode of living, by great cultural achievements in art and science, and all classes of citizens work harmoniously together for the common good, driven by a common determination. The decline sets in with a slackening of effort on the part of the ruling monarch and his dynasty which rapidly affects all the classes of the population. The inevitable result is a growing corruption and demoralisation. The ruler tends to intervene actively in the economic life of the state, creating monopolies which are detrimental to those engaged in the branch of trade and commerce. Taxes are raised and in consequence the artisans and traders lose interest and the economic life declines. Laxity in morals destroys the foundations of family, and group life, discord grows and disunity takes the place of a common bond and endeavour. In short, the life of the state proceeds in cycles. Like natural organisms states rise, grow and develop, decline and fall in an eternally repetitive regular cycle. It is characteristic of Ibn Khaldūn's detached approach to the historical process that he does not put any valuation on the results of his critical inquiry. History—for him—is not to be understood as the progressive deployment of the best in human nature, both intellectually and ethically, with inevitable retrogression at times, but showing an upward trend, consciously fostered by religio-ethical teaching. Ibn Khaldūn does not even put the question of progress, he says nothing about successive dynasties which are building upon foundations laid by their predecessors. No doubt, every new dynasty which comes to power by conquest, revolution or intrigue or also by the driving force of a religious ideal as was the case with the Almoravids and Amohads, inherits the material civilisation prevailing in the time of its predecessor in

power. He is not interested in moral judgments, it is quite immaterial to him whether the moral and cultural achievements are higher or lower than under a previous dynasty. What matters is that it is the same driving force—*'aṣabiyya*—that prompts a new dynasty to wrest power from another disintegrating ruling family and to establish its own authority instead. The achievements of its reign depend upon the character of that *'aṣabiyya*. If its content is sheer will to power alone, reinforced by the united élan of the clan, it will spend its force and precipitate the inevitable turning of the cycle. If it is—on the other hand—strengthened and often gradually supplanted by the religious ideal—as is the case with Muslims generally—the natural process of growth, peak, decay and fall is spread over a longer period. But the five phases of the state run their course during four generations of a dynasty. Where religion as an active influence comes in life is certainly fuller, the achievements are more considerable. The scholar has, for the first time in history, chosen as the field of his penetrating study human society as a whole, the political scientist has made an equally fruitful discovery, *viz.*, the casual interdependence of the contributing factors in the closely-woven fabric of the state. As a Muslim and a student of Greek philosophy at the same time the paramount importance of Law for the maintenance of social life, for the security of individual life and for the protection of property is evident for him. But he sees Law not in the form of the *Shari'a*—admittedly the ideal constitution of the perfect Islamic state—it is for him one of several important factors in the state and in its natural development. He realised, for the first time in history, the principal importance of a stable economy, not only in itself but in relation to a well-balanced budget and to an efficient, loyal army. Sound finance and disciplined army are the two pillars of the Power-State. A free economy without monopolies dominated by the ruler is equally essential to the security and property of the state. All these factors must

be in a state of equilibrium if the stability of the state is to be ensured The least disturbance of one of them has serious repercussions upon the others. This is, in fact, the important original contribution which Ibn Khaldūn has made to the understanding of history in general and to the history of political theory in particular. Unlike the ideal state of the *Sharī'a* or of the *Falāsifa* as the disciples of the Greek philosophers Ibn Khaldūn's state is the actual state, the State in the Flesh, not in the Spirit, Ibn Khaldūn studies the history of Islam, its institutions and especially its many states of his time. He boldly drew general conclusions from his impartial study and crystallised his own experience into a novel theory about *'umrān*, the sum-total of human achievement in history. Although Islamic society provided him with the material for his observations and deductions he considered his conclusions to be applicable to every state. He makes allowance for the innate urge to power in strong individuals but he does not allow—we think—sufficient scope for the *imponderables* in human nature generally and in the group-mind in particular and its manifestations in religious and political movements. He could not make this allowance if his New Science was to provide a sure basis for the understanding of the historical process, especially in its political aspect. The law of absolute causality brooks no rivals, neither in the form of the absolute will of the Creator-God Who rules the Universe, nor in the shape of the arbitrary whim of the despot who is animated by the lust for power. And yet, it must not be forgotten that as a devout Muslim he saw in Islam the most perfect system of life. But this did not blind him to the reality of political life. As a shrewd observer of the state as it was—not as it ought to be—he would assign Religion only a place of utmost importance, no doubt—alongside with other powerful factors which together determine and make up the life of human society. The ethical teachings of Religion, its command to study and apply the Law in order to enable man to come near to God through

knowledge of Him exerted an incomparably strong influence on the spiritual nature of man. Moral and intellectual perfection are unthinkable without this religious knowledge. But at the same time Ibn Khaldūn fears that its appeal to faith and obedience may be detrimental to the active participation of man as a citizen in the offairs of the political community. It is this aspect which is uppermost in the mind of Ibn Khaldūn as a political thinker who would not allow the ideal to obscure the lessons of history.

A PLEA FOR DEEPER STUDY OF THE MUSLIM SCIENTISTS*

—MOHAMMAD IQBAL

SOMETIME ago various questions arose in my mind regarding the culture of Islam as embodying the world-feeling of a specific group of mankind. Is Modern Science purely Western in origin? Why did the Muslims devote themselves to architecture as a mode of self-expression; and why did they comparatively ignore music and painting? What light, if any, do their mathematics and their decorative art throw on their intellectual and emotional attitude towards the concepts of space and time? Are there any psychological conditions which determined the rise and final acceptance, as an orthodox religious dogma, of a boldly conceived Atomic theory wholly unlike the Greek theory? What is the psychological meaning of *mi'raj* in the cultural history of Islam? Professor Macdonald has recently tried to prove the existence of Buddhistic influence on the rise and growth of Atomism in Islam. But the cultural problem which I have ventured to raise is far more important than the purely historical question answered by Professor Macdonald. Similarly Professor Bevan has given us valuable historical discussion of the story of the *mi'raj*. To my mind, however, what is, culturally speaking, more important is the intense appeal that the story has always made to the average Muslim, and the manner in which Muslim thought and imagination have worked on it. It must be something more than a mere religious dogma, for it appealed to the great mind of Dante, and, through Muhyiuddin Ibn-ul-'Arabi furnished a model for the sublimest part of the Divine Comedy whichsymbolises the culture of mediæval

* Being the substance of an address delivered by the author before the Conference of Orientalists.

Europe. The historian may rest satisfied with the conclusion that the Muslim belief in the Prophet's Ascension finds no justification in the Qur'ān; yet the psychologist who aims at a deeper view of Islamic culture cannot ignore the fact that the outlook given by the Qur'ān to its followers does demand the story as a formative element in the world-picture of Islam. The truth is that *it is absolutely necessary to answer all such questions*, and mutually to adjust their answers into a systematic whole of thought and emotion. Without this it is impossible to discover the ruling concepts of a given culture, and to appreciate the spirit that permeates it. However, a comprehensive view of the culture of Islam, as an expression of the spiritual life of its followers, is easy of achievement.

The culture of Islam is the youngest of all Asiatic cultures. For us moderns it is far more easy to grasp the spirit of this culture than to imagine the world-picture of those ancient cultures whose intellectual and emotional attitude it is extremely difficult to express in a modern language. The difficulty of the historian of Muslim culture is mainly due to the almost total lack of Arabic scholars trained in special sciences. European scholars have done good work in the domain of Muslim history, philology, religion and literature. Muslim philosophy too has had a share of their attention; but I am afraid the work done in philosophy is, on the whole, of superficial kind, and often betrays ignorance of both Muslim and European thought. It is in art as well as in the concepts of special sciences and philosophy that the true spirit of a culture is revealed. But, for the reason mentioned above, the student of Muslim culture is yet very far from understanding the spirit of that culture. Briffault, in his *Making of Humanity*—a book which every student of the history of culture ought to read—tells us that "neither Roger Bacon nor his later namesake has any title to be credited with having introduced the experimental method." And further that "the experimental method of the Arabs was by Bacon's time widespread and eagerly culti-

vated throughout Europe." Now, I have reasons to believe that the origin of Descartes' Method and Bacon's *Novum Organum* goes back to Muslim critics of Greek logic, *e.g.*, Ibn Taimiyya, Ghazzālī, Rāzī and Shahāb-uddīn Suhrawardī Maqtūl. But it is obvious that the existing material which would prove this thesis can be handled only by those Arabic scholars who have made a special study of Greek, Muslim and European logic.

Again, our ignorance of the concepts of Muslim science sometimes leads to erroneous views of modern culture. An instance of this I find in Spengler's extremely learned work, *Untergang des Abendlandes*, in which he has developed a new theory of the birth and growth of cultures. While discussing the concept of number in the classical, Arabian and modern cultures, and contrasting the Greek notion of magnitude with the Arabian indeterminateness of number, he says:—

"Number as pure magnitude inherent in the material presentness of things is paralleled by number as pure relation, and if we may characterize the Classical "World," the cosmos, as being based on a deep need of visible limits and composed accordingly as a sum of material things, so we may say that our world-picture is an actualising of an infinite space in which things visible appear very nearly as realities of a lower order, limited in the presence of the illimitable. *The symbol of the West is an idea of which no other Culture gives even a hint, the idea of Function.* The function is anything rather than an expansion of, it is complete emancipation from, any pre-existent idea of number. With the function, not only the Euclidean Geometry but also the Archimedean arithmetic ceased to have any value for the really significant mathematics of Western Europe."

The last three sentences in this passage are in fact the foundation-stone on which the superstructure of Spengler's theory largely rests. Unfortunately, the thesis that no other culture gives even a hint of the idea of Function is incorrect,

I had a vague recollection of the idea of function in al-Berūnī, and not being a mathematician, I sought the help of Dr. Ẓiā'-uddīn of Aligarh who very kindly gave me an English translation of al-Berūnī's passage, and wrote to me an interesting letter from which I quote the following:

"Al-Berūnī in his book, Qanūn-i Mas'ūdī, used Newton's formula of Interpolation for valuing the various intermediary angles of Trigonometry functions from his tables which were calculated for every increase of fifteen minutes. He gave Geometrical proof of Interpolation formula. In the end he wrote a paragraph saying that this proof can be applied to any function whatsoever whether it may be increasing or diminishing with the increase of arguments. He did not use the word function, but he expressed the idea of function in generalising the formula of Interpolation from Trigonometrical function to any function whatsoever. I may add here that I drew the attention of Prof. Schwartzschild—Professor of Astronomy in the Gottingen University—to this passage, and he was so much surprised that he took Prof. Andrews with him to the library, and got the whole passage translated three times before he began to believe it."

It is not possible for me here to discuss Spengler's theory, and to show how materially his oversight affects his view of history. Suffice it to say that a genetic view of the cultures associated with the two great Semitic religions reveals their spiritual relationship which tends to falsify Spengler's thesis that cultures, as organic structures, are completely alien to one another. But this brief reference to one of the most important concepts of modern mathematics reminds me of غایة الامکان فی درایة المکان (" The extent of possibility in the science of Space." Ed.—"I.C.") of 'Irāqī. During my correspondence with Maulvi Syed Anwar Shah, one of the most learned traditionists in the Muslim world of today, regarding the meaning

of the word 'Dahr' (time,) occurring in the well-known tradition لا تسبو الدھر ان الدھر ھو اللہ ("Deal not in invective against Time (with Time's vicissitudes) Lo ! Time (with Time's vicissitudes) is Allah." Ed. "I.C.") the Maulvī Sāḥib referred to this manuscript ; and later, at my request, very kindly sent me a copy of it. I consider it necessary to give you an account of the contents of this valuable document, partly because it will furnish additional reason for dissatisfaction with Spengler's theory, but mainly because I mean thereby to impress upon you the need of Oriental research in the concepts of special sciences as developed in the world of Islam. Moreover it is likely that this small manuscript of great value may lead to the opening up of a fresh field of inquiry about the origins of our concepts of space and time, the importance of which has only recently been realised by modern Physics.

There is, however, some doubt about the authorship of the booklet. Ḥajjī Khalīfah attributes it to one Sh. Maḥmūd whom I have not been able to trace About the middle of the text the following sentence occurs :—

این مخدره غیبی . . . . چون بمشاطگی بیان این بنده ضعیف
باخر زمانیان جلوه کند امیدوارم که تشنگان جرعه حقیقت
در ایام آخرالزمان از دست این ساقی عراقی جمال زلال
شیرین مشاهده نمایند ـ

Personally I am inclined to think that in this manuscript we are in a more intimate touch with the Persian Ṣūfī 'Irāqī whose freedom of thought and action brought on him the odium of the orthodox both in Egypt and India. However, the reason why he was led to reduce his thoughts to writing is thus explained :

و بایستے که این اسرار عزیز در صمیم جان و سویدائے دل
مکنون و مخزون داشتمے نه ازراه بخل بل از راه عزت

و نفاست ولیکن عذر درجلوه کردن این مخدره عذرا آنست
که وقتے درا ثنائے سخن وگرمی دل بر زبان لفظ مکان رفت
و چون لفظ مکان در اخبار آمده است انکار نباید کرد ولیکن
مکان را بباید شناخت که عبارت از چیست تا تشبیه از راه
خیزد پس جماعتے از کور دلان شور بخت چون لفظ مکان
شنیدند از سر تعصب وحسد و عناد و جحود این کلمه را
دست آویز ساختند و بر نجانیدن ما میان بستند ورقم تشبیه برما
کشیدند وبتکفیر ما فتوائے نوشتند پس ناچار از بهر برات
ساخت دل؟ خود از غبار تشبیه این مخدره عذرا از اهدان
عالمیان عالم طبیعت عرض بایست کردن و این یوسف باجمال بان
کوران جلوه بایستے داد تا رفع ظن ایشان بوده باشد ـ اگر
چه معلوم بود که درد تعصب و حسد درمان نمی پزیرد
چنانچه باران که ماده حیات است مر دار را جز تباهی نمی
افزاید ـ ان الذین حقت علیهم کلمت ربك لا یومنون ٭ ولو جاءتهم
کل آیة حتی یروا العذاب الالیم ـ

Assuming, then, that the writer is Fakhr-uddīn 'Irāqī, it is significant to note that he was a contemporary of Naṣīr-ud-dīn Tūsī. Ṭūsī's work on Euclid was printed in Rome in 1594, and John Wallis introduced it to the University of Oxford about the middle of the 17th century. It is Ṭūsī's effort to improve the parallel postulate of Euclid that is believed to have furnished a basis in Europe for the problem of space which eventually led to the theories of Gauss and Reimann. 'Irāqi, however, was not a mathematician, though his view of space and time appears to me to be several centuries ahead of Ṭūsī. This necessitates a very careful inquiry into the progress of

mathematical thought in Islam with a view to discover whether 'Irāqī's conclusions were ever reached through a purely mathematical channel.

I will now proceed to summarise the substance of 'Irāqī's discussion of time and space mainly in his own words. The secret of time and space is the greatest of secrets. To know it is to know the secret of the Being and attributes of God. The existence of some kind of space in relation to God is clear from the following verses of the Qur'ān:

> "Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth? Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth; nor five, but He is their sixth: nor fewer nor more, but wherever they be He is with them." (58.8).
>
> "Ye shall not be employed in affairs, nor shall ye read a text out of the Qur'ān, nor shall ye work any work, but We will be witness over you when you are engaged therein; and the weight of an atom of Earth or in Heaven escapeth not thy Lord; nor is there weight that is less than this or greater but it is in the Pers picuous Book." (10.62).
>
> "We created man: and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are closer to him than his neck-vein." (50.15).

But we must not forget that the words proximity, contact and mutual separation, which apply to material bodies, do not apply to God. Divine life is in touch with the whole Universe on the analogy of the soul's contact with the body. The soul is neither inside nor outside the body; neither proximate to nor separate from it. Yet its contact with every atom of the body is real, and it is impossible to conceive this contact except by positing some kind of space which befits the subtleness of the soul. The existence of space in relation to the life of God, therefore, cannot be denied; only we should carefully

define the kind of space which may be predicated of the Absoluteness of God. Now there are three kinds of space—the space of material bodies, the space of immaterial beings, and the space of God. The space of material bodies is further divided into three kinds. First, the space of gross bodies of which we predicate roominess. In this space movement takes time, bodies occupy their respective places and resist displacement. Secondly, the space of subtle bodies, e.g., air and sound. In this space two bodies resist each other and their movement is measurable in terms of time which, however, appears to be different to the time of gross bodies. The air in a tube must be displaced before other air can enter into it; and the time of sound-waves is practically nothing compared to the time of gross bodies. Thirdly, we have the space of light. The light of the Sun instantly reaches the farthest limits of the Earth. Thus in the velocity of light and sound time is reduced almost to zero. It is, therefore, clear that the space of light is different to the space of air and sound. There is, however, a more effective argument than this. The light of a candle spreads in all directions in a room without displacing the air in the room; and this shows that the space of light is more subtle than the space of air which has no entry into the space of light. In view of the close proximity of these spaces, however, it is not possible to distinguish the one from the other except by purely intellectual analysis and spiritual experience. Again, in the hot water the two opposites—fire and water—which appear to interpenetrate each other cannot, in view of their respective natures, exist in the same space. The fact cannot be explained except on the supposition that the spaces of the two substances, though closely proximate to each other, are nevertheless distinct. But while the element of distance is not entirely absent, there is no possibility of mutual resistance in the space of light. The light of a candle reaches up to a certain point only and the lights of a hundred candles intermingle in the same room without displacing one another.

Having thus described the spaces of physical bodies, possessing various degrees of subtleness, 'Irâqî proceeds briefly to describe the main varieties of space operated upon by the various classes of immaterial beings, e.g. angels. The element of distance is not entirely absent from these spaces; for immaterial beings, while they can easily pass through stone walls, cannot altogether dispense with motion which, according to 'Irâqî, is evidence of imperfection in spirituality. The highest point in the scale of spatial freedom is reached by the human soul which, in its unique essence, is neither at rest nor in motion. Thus passing through the infinite varieties of space we reach the Divine space which is absolutely free from all dimensions and constitutes the meeting point of all infinities.

In a similar manner 'Irâqî deals with time. There are infinite varieties of time relative to the varying grades of being intervening between materiality and pure spirituality. The time of gross bodies which arises from the revolutions of the heavens is divisible into past, present, and future; and its nature is such that as long as one day does not pass away the succeeding day does not come. The time of immaterial beings is also serial in character: but its passage is such that a whole year in the time of gross bodies is not more than a day in the time of immaterial beings. Rising higher and higher in the scale of immaterial beings we reach the notion of Divine Time which is absolutely free from the quality of 'passage,' and consequently does not admit of divisibility, sequence and change. It is above eternity; it has neither beginning nor end. The 'eye' of God sees all the visibles and His 'ear' hears all the audibles in one indivisible act of perception. The priority of God is not due to the priority of time; on the other hand the priority of time is due to God's priority. Thus Divine Time is what the Qur'ân describes as the 'Mother of Books' in which the whole of history, freed from the net of causal sequence is gathered up in a single super-eternal 'now.'

From this summary of 'Irâqî's view you will see how a cultured Muslim Sûfî intellectually interpreted his spiritual

experience of time and space in an age which had no idea of the theories and concepts of modern mathematics and physics. In fact this theory of a plural space may be taken as a primitive stage in the modern hyperspace movement which originated in Nasir-uddīn Tūsī's efforts to improve the parallel postulate of Euclid. In modern times it was Kant who first definitely suggested the idea of different spaces as you will see from the following passage which I quote from his Prolegomena :

> "That complete space (which is itself no longer the boundary of another space) has three dimensions ; and that space in general cannot have more, is based on the proposition that not more than three lines can intersect at right angles in one point...... ..That we can require a line to be drawn to infinity, a series of changes to be continued (for example, spaces passed through by motion) in indefinitum, presupposes a representation of space and time which can only attach to intuition."

But Kant was not a mathematician. It was left for professional mathematicians of the 18th and the 19th centuries finally to reach the concept of space as a dynamic appearance, and, as such generable and finite. Irāqī's mind seems to be vaguely struggling with the concept of space as an infinite continuum ; yet he was unable to see the full implications of his thought partly because he was not a mathematician and partly because of his natural prejudice in favour of the traditional Aristotelian idea of a fixed Universe. If he had been able to raise the question whether dimensionality is a property of the world or a property of our knowledge of the world, he would have felt the necessity of a searching examination of his own consciousness, and this would have opened up to him a line of thought much more in keeping with his sufistic standpoint. Again, the interpenetration of the superspatial 'here' and the super-eternal 'now' in the ultimate Reality suggests the modern notion of space-time which Prof Alexander, in his lectures on 'Space, Time and Deity,' regards as the matrix of all things. A keener

insight into the nature of time would have led 'Irâqî to see that time is the more fundamental of the two; and that it is not a mere metaphor to say, as Prof. Alexander does say, that time is the mind of space. 'Irâqî conceives God's relation to the Universe on the analogy of the relation of the human soul to the body; but, instead of philosophically reaching this position through a criticism of the spatial and temporal aspects of experience, he simply postulates it on the basis of his spiritual experience. It is not sufficient merely to reduce space and time to a vanishing point-instant. The philosophical path that leads to God as the Omnipsyche of the universe lies through the discovery of Living Thought as the ultimate principle of space-time. 'Irâqî's mind, no doubt moved in the right direction; but his Aristotelian prejudice coupled with a lack of psychological analysis blocked his progress. With his view that Divine Time is utterly devoid of change—a view obviously based on an inadequate analysis of conscious experience—it was not possible for him to discover the relation between Divine Time and serial time, and to reach, through this discovery, the essentially Islamic idea of continuous creation which means a growing universe.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OR THE PROPHETIC CONSCIOUSNESS

(*Some views about* کشف و وحی)

—KHALIFA 'ABDUL-HAKIM

ALL the mystics of Islam and most of the thinkers have believed in the validity of religious experience. Religious experience has been examined from the psychological and metaphysical as well as the axiological point of view. The questions of the nature of it and the validity of it have been thoroughly examined. In this short paper I shall attempt to give a sketch of the points of view adopted by some of the chief thinkers and mystics.

According to Ghazzālī there are grades of consciousness corresponding to the grades of reality. Every grade of consciousness is an instrument of cognition. Leaving out the creatures lower than man, if we start with the human being at his birth, we find him starting life with an indeterminate, booming and buzzing confusion, and the differentiation and functioning of the separate and distinct senses proceed gradually and evolve step by step. The child starts with the lowest and the least instructive of all the senses, the sense of touch, which gives him an elementary idea of something there, hard or soft, hot or cold. The higher senses of sight and sound may be genetically considered as an evolution or refinement of the sense of touch, but after the development the difference between the higher senses and the lower senses of touch appears to be not a difference of degree but a difference of kind and quality. Evolution is in a way emergent and creative; until the higher has emerged, the lower can neither cognise nor imagine nor adumbrate it. The senses unfold one after the other; the one that develops

later is higher than the one that preceded it. After that occurs the integration of sensations, developing into perceptions and apperceptions. Apperceptive unity manifests itself as reason, while thought working on the basis of the senses still transcends them and forms ultra-sensual or ultra-empirical concepts. Reason rises on the ladder of sensual experience, but discovering the inadequacy of the senses it can afford to kick away the ladder. From the *a posteriori* it rises to the *a priori*. In the evolution of consciousness the lower cannot comprehend the higher, but the higher embraces the lower and transforms it. Intellectualistic philosophy stops at ratiocination or the discursive intellect, and for a Plato or a Hegel there is nothing higher than the dialectical reason, dealing with ground and consequence, premises and conclusion, or the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The chief quarrel between the rationalist and the ultra-rationalist lies here. Ghazzālī says that the senses are valid so far as they go and so is the logical reason, but as the senses are transcended in the logical reason, so is the logical reason transcended in superior states of consciousness. In his autobiography المنقذ من الضلال he says—[1]

بل الإيمان بالنبوة أن يقر باثبات طور وراء العقل تنفتح فيه عين يدرك بها مدركات خاصة و العقل معزول عنها كعزل السمع عن إدراك الألوان .

To believe in the prophetic consciousness means to accept the thesis that there is a grade of consciousness superior to the logical reason, which opens an eye that cognises realities as inaccessible to reason as colours are inaccessible to the auditory sense A conclusive demonstration of the existence and validity of this consciousness cannot be made to anyone who has not tasted it. As to the question whether the power could be attained by everyone, Ghazzâlī says that potentially it is there in all human beings, but as with respect to reason men are born with

(1) *Al-Munqidh-min-al-Dalal*, (Cairo press), p. 31.

great differences, and some seem to attain to a particular type of knowledge with little or no effort, so in the matter of this supra-rational consciousness there are divinely gifted geniuses who attain by inspiration and revelation what would be achieved with great difficulty by the less gifted, or may appear to be unattainable by the obtuse and the dull. He adds to this that to sharpen and refine the logical reason is not the way to transcend it, just as no amount of the sharpening of the eyesight would make a man more rational. In ordinary life practice follows knowledge, but in the matter of prophetic consciousness knowledge follows practice. Particular practices and modes of life open the way to it. If it be asked whether it opens up new vistas of reality or illumines the physical, the sensible, and the rational spheres also, his answer seems to be that doubts arising on the lower planes vanish in this higher light. This consciousness illumines reason as reason illumines the senses. Ghazzālī says that all that genuine religion presents, be it a matter of rational or blind faith, becomes direct intuition and perception, above the necessity of proof and beyond the grip of doubt. Religious consciousness is not faith but perception.

From Ghazzālī I turn now to Rūmī. He connects this question with his metaphysics and a large outlook on life. He says that all reality is life, in various grades of evolution. From the soul-atom or the atomic soul or the monad up to the immanent and transcendent God there is a continuous gradation. The nature of life is spiritual and the essence of the spirit is consciousness.

جان چه باشد باخبر از خیر و شر شاد از احسان و گریان از ضرر

چون سر و ماهیت جان مخبر است هر که او آگاه تر با جان تر است

اقتضاے جان چو اے دل آگاهی ست

هر که آگاه تر بود جانش قوی ست

روح را تاثیر آگاهی بود هر کرا این بیش اللهی بود

جان ما از جان حیوان بیشتر   از چه رو زان کو فزون دارد خبر

پس فزون از جان ما جان ملک   کو رها گشته ز حس مشترک

بی جهت دان عقل علام البیان   عقل‌تر از عقل و جان‌تر هم ز جان

As there are grades of life and consciousness, so one might say there are grades of reason. Reason in the narrower sense is logical reason and discursive intellect, but reason in a wider sense is identical with consciousness. Even the atom is conscious and possesses reason in an initial stage; one might call it material or physical or inorganic reason. If there were no reason in matter, it would be subject to no laws and hence would not be intelligible, and in the further step of evolution life and reason and consciousness would not evolve or emerge if they were not already there in a rudimentary and potential stage. Rūmī has anticipated the monadology of Leibnitz and says that reality consists of soul-centres which are graded according to the clarity and the width of consciousness attained by them. He says that all life has evolved from the lowest stages, and so have I evolved from dark and helpless atomicity to human reason. I have progressed and passed the stages of physical reason, vegetable reason, animal reason and human reason.

But human reason is not the culminating point. Man is not a destination, he is a transition and the essence of life is self-transcendence and gradual realisation of divine consciousness. He says that matter moves in space and time but mind is essentially nonspatial while consciousness at a lower level and logical reason are spatio-temporal and pragmatic. Mind seems to be caught in the spatio-temporal net but even now in its reality it transcends it.

حاشا لله تو برونی زین جهان   هم بوقت زندگی هم بعد آن

غیر فهم و جان که در گاو و خر است آدمی را عقل و جان دیگرست
باز غیر عقل و جان آدمی هست جانی در نبی و در ولی
روح وحی از عقل پنهان‌تر بود زانکه او غیب است و او زان سر بود

As our body is related to our present limited consciousness so this consciousness is a sort of body or manifestation or instrument of a higher consciousness. The spatio-temporal world is a womb out of which we have to emerge in a new birth. Beyond our mind there is an overmind and a supermind which are realised in the mystic and the prophet. They cognise realities that are not subject to the categories of time and space and causation. Superior consciousness belongs to the realm of Divine Will (عالم امر) and its spatio-temporal manifestations belong to the realm of creation (عالم خلق).

عالم خلق است با سوی و جهات بی جهت دان عالم امر و صفات

In short, the mystical or prophetic consciousness is a higher development of the potentialities of life. Revelation is not mere pouring-down into the soul of knowledge that comes from an external source. The prophet is perfectly sincere in maintaining that he himself is not the source of his revelations, because his conscious, rational self is not the source of them nor is it knowledge that has cropped up from the darkness of his subliminal self. This knowledge is not subliminal but supraliminal; it is not the product of subconsciousness but of superconsciousness. The emergence of superconsciousness is felt by the recipient as a gift from outside himself; although the human spirit, being potentially divine is endowed with unlimited possibilities of God-realisation, there can be nothing outside of it. The idea that revelation is received from outside is a crude popular idea, which conceives of God as a person or object living outside in the heavens and compelled to use fast messengers in order to deliver his messages to the elect. In the mythological conception the popular imagination and orthodox belief

have spatialised and degraded the human as well as the Divine Spirit. The popular idea of inspiration and revelation (الہام and وحی) is based on spacial imageries. As soon as one is convinced by Kantian epistemology, Bergsonian metaphysics, or mystical experience that the category of space is subjective or pragmatic and that noumenal reality is not spatial, it becomes easy to understand that superior aspects of reality are superior grades of a spirit evolving from within. In this respect a quatrain of Sarmad is very illuminating—

آن راکه سرحقیقتش باو رشد   خود پهن تراز سپهر پهناو رشد
ملا گوید که برشد احمد بفلک   سرمد گوید فلک به احمد درشد

With the realisation of reality, it is the spirit that expands and embraces the universe, without soaring physically towards the heavens. Love and knowledge of God are attained by the transcendence of present limitations and not by any messages transmitted from an external God in the heavens. People have been afraid of reducing revelation to the subjective whims of the limited and self-seeking ego: thus Christ said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and so says the Holy Qur'ān (و فی انفسکم، افلا تبصرون it is all in your own souls if you could only see). One might say that the Kingdom of Hell is also within us, and between the Heaven and the Hell there is a thin partition. The Hell within us is the Freudian subconscious which can simulate moral and angelic forms. The extreme difficulty of separating the subconscious from the superconscious was felt by a large number of mystics, and the greatest of them had become masters of indubitable criteria to judge the quality and validity of their own experiences and the experiences of those who sought their guidance. Rūmī says that a touchstone is required to distinguish the noble from the base metal and after a certain grade of purity is attained this touchstone is developed within the self. Rūmī agrees with Ghazzālī this revelation is a phenomenon of a super-rational state of consciousness—

روح وحی از عقل پنهان تر بود

To attain to prophetic consciousness not more logical reason but a deepening and heightening and purification of consciousness is required. The ego must be emptied of its dark passions and sensualistic urges, so that the spirit may become like a polished mirror for a better reflection of reality:

آئینه دل چون شود صاف و پاک　　نقشها بینی برون از آب و خاک

When this state is attained, even the lower senses become illumined with a new light and the ear and the nose begin to have perception like the eye;

پس بدانی چونکه رستی از بدن　　گوش و بینی چشم می تاند شدن

Rūmī says that the visualising of message-bringing angels is a dramatising and symbolising activity of the human spirit, and he hesitatingly illustrates it from the analogy of dreaming. In dreaming, a man's ideas and wishes and latent desires are symbolised in persons and places and situations. He dreams that somebody is with him in a particular situation. In reality there is no other person there, it is his own projected self. Similarly, the states of superconsciousness, the revelations of higher realities, on entering the sphere of the lower mind are symbolised, sensualised, and dramatised. The Angel Gabriel or the Holy Ghost (روح القدس) is a faculty of the human spirit; but understanding it as such does not make it arbitrary and undivine; it is the Divine latent in man that has been manifested:

پس محل وحی گردد گوش جان　　وحی چه بود گفتن از حس نهان

از پی روپوش عامه در جهان　　وحی دل گویند او را صوفیان

چیزی دیگر ماند اما گفتنش　　با تو روح القدس گوید نی منش

نی تو گوئی هم بگوش خویشتن　　بی من و بی غیر ای من هم تو من

همچو آن وقتی که خواب اندر روی　　تو ز پیش خوب به پیش خود شوی
بشنوی از خویش و پنداری فلان　　با تو اندر خواب گفت است آن نهان

'Abdul 'Alī Baḥrul-'Ulūm, the commentator of Rūmī writes the following commentary on these verses:[2]

پس جبرئیل که مشهود رسل علیهم السلام است، و وحی از جانب حق سبحانه می رساند آن حقیقت جبرئیلیه است که قوتی از قوائی رسل بود، متصور شده در عالم مثال به صورتی که مکنون بود در رسل مشهود می شود و مرسل می گردد و پیغام حق می رساند. پس رسل متفیض از خود اند نه از دیگری پس هر چه که رسل مشاهده می کنند مخزون در خزانه جناب ایشان بود،

At the end of this commentary Baḥrul-'Ulūm quotes Moḥiuddīn Ibn-i 'Arabī in support—

فای صاحب کشف شاهد صورة تلقی الیه ما لم یکن عنده من المعارف و تمنحه ما لم یکن مثل ذلك فی یده فتلك الصورة عینه و لا غیره فمن شجرة نفسه جنی ثمرة غرسه .

Whenever somebody has a supersensible perception of a being which imparts to him knowledge that he had never acquired consciously, this being is his own externalized form and not a being other than himself; he has plucked a fruit from the tree of his own self.

There are the basement and the cellar of the self, and also the upper storeys of it where it touches the stars and then ascends beyond them. Sensibly or supersensibly perceived

(2) Commentary on the *Mathnavi* by 'Abdul 'Ali Bahrul-'Ulum, Nawalkishore Press, p. 94.

figures and events are results of the symbolising and dramatising activity of the self; but in all genuine experiences, the appearances and the symbols are not illusions and hallucinations but appearances of a reality. Very similar phenomena occur in pathological cases too, so all the great Ṣūfīs emphatically warn the uninitiated not to confuse the pathological with the Divine. Dream dramatization and revelation symbolisation are clearly distinguished by those who have been rightly guided. The source, the validity, and the value consequences are self-evidently rooted in reality. A similar difference exists between magic and miracles. The power of rising to superior states of consciousness carries with it enhanced power over mind, body and matter. According to the mystic idealistic view, consciousness is identical with life and force. Even mind at a lower plane does act on the body and the environment, but with enhanced powers the causation at the lower plane is not abrogated but is acted upon by still higher and freer causes. Magic, on the other hand is utilization of the supersensible for the degradation of the higher and the exaltation of the lower forces.

Shah Walīullāh[3] of Delhi has dealt at length with the problem of symbolization and has adopted a point of view which is different from that of Rūmī and Ibn-i-'Arabī. He says that it is not the mind that dramatizes, but there is a self-subsistent Realm of Symbols which he calls (عالم مثال) It is a realm in which abstract ideas, ideals, and events, good and evil, assume shapes and seem to move in space. These shapes are not physical nor is the space and movement in this realm in anyway analogous to our common spatio-temporal experiences. Prayer, charity, and all good actions and abstract ideas assume perceptible forms in this realm. The world, for instance, would appear as an ugly hag and a good action as a beautiful virgin. There are a number of statements in the Hadīth where ideas and events are described by the Prophet as having been seen by

(3) *Hujjatullahil-Balighah*, Himayat al-Islam Press, Lahore, p. 21.

him in different shapes and forms, and events on the Day of Judgment are foretold as assuming not material but perceptible bodies. Shah Ṣāḥib says that the Angel Gabriel seen by Mary and the Angel Gabriel who brought Divine messages to the Prophet belong to this realm. The angels that appear to a dying man are also visualized in the realm. Shah Ṣāḥib holds that they are not subjective illusions or hallucinations nor are they products of the symbolising activity of the self; they belong to a non-material, self-subsistent realm. The nature of that realm is the symbolisation of ideas and realities and the personification of attributes.

So about the nature of things revealed one could have three different views: one, that the objects perceived are not self-subsistent, they only appear so to the perceiver; two, that the objects and shapes are self-subsistent, existing in a symbolized realm; and three, that they are merely used as similes and allegories. To the philosopher the last explanation appears to be satisfactory; the second explanation, which is that of a number of Ṣūfīs, is in agreement with the psychological view. On account of fundamentally different views of mind and reality, these conclusions diverge when they come to the question of validity. We find among Muslim thinkers and mystics representatives of all the three schools.

To me the view held by Rūmī and Ibn-i-'Arābī appears to be far sounder than that of Shāh Walīullāh. They are at one in believing that certain religious experiences are valid and expressive of realities.

Ghazzālī and Rūmī believe in super-rational states of consciousness to which the saints and the prophets attain, and which point to a further ascent in the course of evolution. The man of revelation is not a unique being whose experiences are unrepeatable, special gifts of grace. The saint or the prophet is a pioneer, inviting others to follow him and transcend the present limitations of consciousness. According to Rūmī and

Ibn-i-'Arabī these superior states are sometimes symbolizations in a kind of subjective-objective experience. There is no realm of self-subsistent symbols. The symbol varies with the spiritual and the cultural condition of the perceiver. The ultimate reality is not the symbol but the spiritual state symbolized. These views are in perfect agreement with that view of the psychology of religion which is presented in William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. James holds that the subjective symbolic setting does not necessarily affect the validity of the experience. I do not find the view of Shāh Walīullāh at all illuminating. Belief in a Realm of Symbols would lend support to all kinds of mythologies. Mythology, after all, is nothing but believing in the self-subsistent forms, symbolising ideas, notions and emotions. When liberty, chastity, fidelity are viewed as gods and goddesses living immortally in a ghostly Realm of Symbols, we get rather a justification of mythology than an explanation of religious experience. It appears to me that Shāh Walīullāh in attempting to establish the objectivity of the Realm of Symbols, has unwittingly supported the myth-creating imagination.

SHAIKH NAṢĪRUDDĪN MAḤMŪD CHIRĀGH-I-DEHLĪ[1] AS A GREAT HISTORICAL PERSONALITY

—MOHAMMAD HABIB

IT was a little before noon on a hot summer day in Delhi in the early years of Sulṭān 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī's reign that Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā', the greatest Indo-Muslim saint of all times, left his comfortless room on the upper storey, which was burning like an oven, negotiated the clumsy and dangerous staircase, and was about to proceed to a little room that adjoined his Jamā'at-Khāna, a large hall with tall, clumsy pillars in which his disciples lived, prayed and slept according to the principles prescribed for the community life of the mystics But the great Shaikh, who kept his nights alive with prayers, meditations and recitations of select verses was not destined to enjoy his much needed midday rest. For, casting his eyes around him, he discerned a man of about forty-five or so standing in the courtyard under the banyan tree, which some years later was to spread its branches over the roof of the Jamā'at-Khāna, so that the Shaikh and his friends might sit comfortably in the shade. Something in the man, one of his newer disciples, attracted the great Shaikh, for he possessed, in a remarkable degree the 'intuitive intelligence, (Nafs-i-Gīra) of the mystics. The new disciple had come to his master, even as Shaikh Bahā'uddīn Zakariyya had gone to Shaikh Shahābuddīn 'Umar, the founder of the Suhrwardī Silsilah, after years of study, preparation and self-training He was, to quote a metaphor of the Great Shaikh[2] himself, like 'dry wood' which the mystic-master had but to breathe on and it would burst into flames.

---

(1) In preparing this short biography of the last of the great Chishti mystics, I have confined myself exclusively to contemporary authorities. Amir Ḥasan Sijzi in his *Fawā'id-ul-Fawā'id* refers to our saint only once, but with affection as "Azizi Nasiruddin Maḥmūd" Amir Khurd in his *Siyar-ul-Auliyā'* (Chiranji Lal edition) devotes a section to our Shaikh in the *Bāb* (Chapter) on the 'Successors of Shaikh Niẓāmuddin Auliyā'. He and his family had been for years on intimate terms with the Shaikh. His work, begun some years earlier, was completed soon after the Shaikh's death in 1356 A.D. In 1353-54 Hamid Qalandar compiled a record of 100 Conversations of the Shaikh; he added a Supplement giving a sketch of the Shaikh's life some time after the Shaikh's death. This book, known as the *Khair-ul-Majālis*, has not been printed but I have been able to obtain a copy of the Hyderabad MS. through the kindness of Dr. Yūsuf Ḥusain of the Osmania University. Shaikh Jamali in his *Siyar-ul-'Ārifīn* copies this Supplement, word for word. The title 'Chirāgh-i-Dehli' was given to him by later

The Great Shaikh gave up the idea of his midday rest, turned to the gate-room (Dihliz) and sent one of the servants of the Khânqâh to summon the new disciple.

"Sit down," said the Great Shaikh, surveying the man with those red, sleep-laden eyes of his, well aware that even his Khânqâh was fortunate in the advent of such a mystic. "What is in your heart? What is your aim? What work did your father do?"

From all his higher disciples Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā' ruthlessly demanded the complete severance of all earthly ties. They must have nothing to do with kings and high officers. They must not earn any livelihood ; a feeling of security about his means of livelihood would imply that the disciple depended upon something other than Allāh. So no playing for security, if you are a mystic. Starve and be the guest of Allāh! Earlier Chishtī mystics had only permitted two forms of livelihood—Zamīn-i-Aḥyā, the cultivation of barren land by the mystic's own hand, and Futūḥ, the unasked charity of his neighbours. But the Great Shaikh apparently disapproved of the former as it made the mystic dependent upon the tax-collector. Unasked charity was the only livelihood he would permit.

The new disciple was prepared for all that the human mind and frame can bear in the search for Ḥaq or the Absolute. He had already cast aside all earthly ties, though he belonged to a well-to-do family.

"My father," Shaikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd replied, "had slaves who traded in woollen cloth. The object of my devotions is to pray for the long life of the Shaikh, to attend to the shoes of the Durweshes, and to serve them with my head and eyeballs."

The Great Shaikh's mind inevitably went back to those far-off days when, though the most distinguished of Delhi students and one whom every one expected to have 'a fine career,' he had, almost without an effort, cast all worldly temptations aside and presented himself at the Jamā'at-Khāna of Shaikh Farīduddīn of Ajodhan, determined to tread the mystic path. He possessed nothing, absolutely nothing, in those days. A kindly lady[3] had lent him her Chādar to wind round his waist while she washed his only pair of garments. He had not even a copper coin to buy a little paper on which to jot down his master's instructions.

(2) Most writers have taken the privilege of giving a title of their own to Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn. Amīr Khurd in his *Siyar-ul-Auliyā'* (*Lives of the Saints*) gives him the title of Sulṭan-ul-Mashā'ikh'. But the people of Delhi, in utter disregard of Arabic grammar, have given him the title of 'Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā' after the book, *Siyar-ul-Auliyā'*. I suppose it is too late to protest against this mistake ; for *Auliya* means not saint but 'saints', which is absurd. I have, following my friend, Dr. Moḥammad Salim—*Early History of the Chishti Silsilah in India*—called him 'the Great Shaikh'.

(3) Wife of Maḥmūd Kirmani and grandmother of Amīr Khurd. When Shaikh Farīduddīn died, she came with her husband to the Great Shaikh and looked after his starving household for years.

Here, the Great Shaikh could not fail to see, was a true successor to him, to Shaikh Farīduddīn and to all the great Chishtī mystics of the past.

"Bravo! Now hear me," the Great Shaikh said, "When after finishing my studies I went to Shaikh Farīd at Ajodhan, a friend and class-fellow of mine, with whom I used to have academic discussions (at Delhi), came and put up at an inn. He had a servant to attend to his needs. Seeing me in my grimy and tattered clothes, he exclaimed: 'Maulānā Niẓāmuddīn! What misfortune has befallen you? Had you taken to teaching work at Delhi, you would have become the leading scholar (Mujtahid) of the time with prosperity and sufficient livelihood.' I said nothing in my justification but merely apologized and returned to Shaikh Farīd. 'What would be your answer to such a question?,' Shaikh Farīd asked. 'As the Shaikh directs,' I replied, 'Tell him,' Shaikh Farīd replied :

نــه همرهی تو مرا ' راه خویش گیر برو

ترا سعادت بادا ' مرا نگون ساری[4]

He then asked me to order a tray of every variety of dishes from his kitchen and to take it on my head to my friend, who, genuinely surprised, came to see Shaikh Farīduddīn, and was so charmed by his conversation that he entered the circle of his disciples."

There was no stopping the Great Shaikh once he had started on his favourite theme. He went to the heart of every problem—to the heart of every man. Tears flowed down the Shaikh's cheeks as in that small Looh-swept room he expounded the principles of mysticism to the new disciple, who, on his part, took in everything and understood everything.

This is how, woven round a simple story and a plain verse, the last of the great Chishtī mystics received the spiritual benedictions of his master.[5]

II

The *Khair-ul Majālis* of the inestimable Ḥamīd Qalandar enables us to piece together some events about the family and early life of Shaikh Naṣīruddīn. He came from a family of emigrants to India and his grandfather, 'Abd-ul-Latīf Yezdī, was born in the district of Lahore; but the family migrated to Oudh and Shaikh Naṣīruddīn was born in that historic centre

(4) You are not my travelling companion. Seek your own path. Get along. May prosperity be your portion in life and misfortune mine.

(5) This incident is related by Amīr Khurd on the authority of his uncle, Saiyid Ḥusain, who was present at the conversation. Years later, when Saiyid Ḥusain lay dying, he sent his nephews to remind Shaik Nasiruddīn of the incident.

of Hindu culture. His father, Yahyā,[6] died when he was nine years old, but the family was in affluent circumstances and his mother gave him a good education. He studied the *Hidayah* and the *Pazudi* with Maulānā 'Abd-ul-Karīm Sherwānī; and after the latter's death, he completed his studies in all subjects at Oudh under the instruction of Maulānā Iftikhāruddīn Gīlānī. His relations wanted him to take up some work but he would not hear of it, and at the age of twenty-five he definitely chose the mystic path.

Years later (in 1353 A D) he gave an account of his life at that time and his conception of a well-spent day. "There were pleasant mausoleums (in Oudh) in those days and well-laid out mango-groves. Now both the mausoleums and the mango-groves have disappeared. Every morning I would go out of my house with my brother-in-law, Khwāja Maḥmūd, father of of my nephews, Moīnuddīn and Kamāluddīn,[7] reciting my Wazīfa (religious formula) On reaching the mausoleums, I would say to him, 'Khwāja, you can go home or pray in one of the mausoleums like me. He would select one of these alternatives I said my Zuhr (afternoon) prayer there. At 'Asr-time I gave the call to prayer; about ten or twelve persons would collect together and I led the congregational prayers. After saying Maghrib (evening) and 'Isha (night) prayers there, I returned home, reciting my Waẓīfa all the time I could get a short afternoon nap (Qailūlah) under the mango-graves where the weavers had spread their nets between the tree-trunks; there was no fear that a thief would steal my shoes or my water-pot. On reaching home, I would retire to my room on the roof and spend the whole night in my religious devotions. Years passed like this."

It was not till the death of his mother, who was buried behind the 'Id-gāh of Ajodhya (or Oudh), that Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd could come to Delhi at the age of forty-three and establish himself in a corner of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn's Jamā'at-Khāna to share in its community-life. But family ties still bound him to Oudh. His younger sister, Bībī Lahorī, was dead and her son, Kamāluddīn, was being brought up by his elder sister, Bībī Buba-bādi, along with her own son, Zainuddīn

(6) There is a confusion here about names. Maulānā Ghulām Sarwar in his *Safinat-ul-Asafiya*, p. 351, gives the name of 'Abdul-Laṭīf Yezdi to the Shaikh's grandfather and of Yaḥyā to his father. My copy of the *Khair-ul-Majālis* says that the Shaikh was the son of Yūsuf son of 'Abdur-Rāshid Lahori. The printed text of the *Siyar-ul-'Arifin* says that the Shaikh's grandfather's name was Yaḥya.

In the technical language of the mystics, Shaikh means a person who has received a Certificate of Succession or *Khilafat-Nama* from his master or Pir, and is authorised to enrol disciples.

(7) *Siyarul-'Arifin*, p 90 says that Shaikh Nasiruddin had only one sister older than himself and that Zainuddin and Kamaluddin were her sons. But the Supplement to the *Khair-ul-Majalis* says that he had two sisters. Zainuddin and Kamāluddin lived in the Jamā'at Khāna of the Shaikh in his last years, but nothing more is known of the third nephew, Mo'inuddin. He may have died early.

'Ali. These two nephews were destined to live with him till the end of his days. He often went to visit his surviving sister. Our records only give us an incomplete account of these journeys. "Once," he tells us, "I returned from Oudh with my brothers and the father of Khwāja Yūsuf. In those days I had reduced my diet.' 'He has given up his diet,' my brother said to Mubashshir, the servant of Shaik Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā'. 'Please report the matter to the Shaikh.' Mubashshir went to the Great Shaikh and exaggerated the matter still further. The Shaikh sent me a leaf of bread weighing two seers and hilwa (sweetmeat) with instructions that I should finish them." He found the task difficult owing to the delicate condition of his stomach but carried out the Shaikh's order nonetheless.

On another occasion he reached Delhi in mid-winter and found the Shaikh's Jamā'at-Khāna crowded. "Putting you up is no burden or trouble to me," the great Shaikh apologised to him, "But there are so many travellers here. Your relations in Oudh will also be anxious about you." The last sentence was probably a reference to the impending Mongol attack under Targhi. Shaikh Naṣīruddīn squeezed himself into the Jamā'at-Khāna somehow, but a week later orders were received from Sultān 'Alā'uddin summoning everyone within the city-walls. Shaikh Naṣīruddīn found refuge in the house of Maulānā Burhānuddīn Gharīb, who was destined years later to lay the foundation of the Chishtiyah-Niẓāmiyah Silsilah in the Deccan. The two became very close friends.

On another occasion, when returning from Oudh, Shaikh Naṣīruddīn saw a ruined gate (dewrhi) by the side of the river Gumti, and took it into his head to pull it down and build a mosque on the spot with the material. The name of the place is not given in our records, but it may safely be identified with Jauras, where the mosque still stands. The inhabitants of the place claim to be descended from the sisters of Shaikh Naṣīruddīn. The work took him some months, and before it was completed he heard of the death of his sister, Buba-Abādī. He left his servant or companion, Qāzī 'Arif, to complete the work and went back to Oudh. After staying there for forty days, he started for Delhi with his nephews. He was not destined to see his native town again. "You are coming from the right side," Shaikh Niẓamuddīn said to him, "you have done well in bringing your nephews along." He now definitely settled in the house of Shaikh Burhanuddīn Gharīb in the City, which was at a considerable distance from the great Shaikh's Jamā'at-Khāna at Ghiaspur. His visits to the great Shaikh were therefore infrequent, but according to the Shaikh's own principles, meeting one's master too often was not necessary.

There followed some fifteen years of externally uneventful life, during which Shaikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd's reputation grew steadily among the mystic circles of Delhi. Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā' was one of those few persons who have never been troubled by sex-desire. He had even a theory about it. "Marriage," the great Shaikh said, "is permitted but celibacy is a matter of courage. If a man is so absorbed in thoughts of God that he feels no promptings of sex-desire and is not con-

scious of what it is, inevitably his eyes, and tongue and limbs will be protected (maḥfūẓ). He ought to remain unmarried. But if a man cannot be so absorbed and his heart is prompted by sex-desire, then he should get married. The essence of the matter is cosmic emotion (moḥabbat). If a man's heart is absorbed in God, this will influence his body but if his heart is distracted, then his body will be distracted also." Following the example of the Great Shaikh, some of his distinguished disciples, like Maulānā Fakhruddin Zarradi, also decided to live a celibate life. Shaikh Naṣīruddin Maḥmūd, who had not the Great Shaikh's constitutional immunity from sex-desire, had solved the problem for himself while still in Oudh. "In those early days," he says, "sex desire began to trouble me, and I felt very depressed. In order to suppress this desire I drank so much lemon-juice that I was brought to the verge of death. Still I said to myslef, 'Death is preferable to a life of sex-desire'."

He lived up to the highest standards prescribed by the Great Shaikh, poverty and resignation being the chief of them for 'the mystics at the stage of resignation (raḍa tawakkul) is like the corpse in the hands of the undertaker." Like the Great Shaikh and all his Chishtī predecessors, he would have nothing to do with the great ones of this earth. "There are two terms of abuse among the mystics," he told Ḥamid in his later years, "muqallid and Jurt. Muqallid is a mystic who has no master. Jurt is a mystic who asks people for money, who wraps himself up in a costly cloak (khirqah), puts on a mystic cap and goes to kings and high officers. Why? I am a Durwesh. Give me something."[8]

The great Chishti mystics had always avoided the court of kings, and we find Shaikh Naṣīruddin Maḥmūd telling Ḥamid a story on the subject.

"Once upon a time there was a king who had made it a rule that everyone could have access to him when he was sitting in the public Durbar. Petitioners came with their applications in their hands, which were taken by the chamberlains (Ḥājibs) and handed over to the king. There were gate-keepers (Darbāns) at the entrance but they did not stop anybody.

"One day a Durwesh clad in a patched cloak (khirqah) came to the king's gate and wished to pass according to the custom without any hesitation

"'Turn back!' the gate-keeper shouted.

"The Durwesh was perplexed, 'Khwāja,' he asked the gate-keeper, 'Is it not the custom of this court that no one is forbidden entrance? Everyone is going in. Why do you stop me? Is it on account of my short and insignificant cloak (khirqah)?'

"'Yes,' replied the gate keeper, 'that is exactly the reason why I am preventing your entrance. *You are wearing the garb of saints; and people do not come in this garb to this door. Go back. Take off your saintly garb, put on the dress of worldly men and then I will allow you to enter. But respect for this garb (of the saints) prevents me from permitting you to come in.*'

(8) *Khair ul-Majalis*, Majlis XXIII.

"The Durwesh gave up the request (to the king) which he had in mind. 'I will not give up the garb of the Durweshes,' he replied."

In the years to come Shaikh Nasīruddin's principles vis-a-vis the king of the day were to be sternly tested. But for the present his one desire was to live the life of a mere devotee. "For years," he says, "I had entertained the desire that with a loin-cloth (mirzā'ī) round my waist, a coat round my body and a cap on my head, I might wander from mosque to mosque on hills and plains." He asked his friend, the poet Amīr Khusrau, who saw the Great Shaikh almost every day after dinner and was allowed to talk of almost everything he liked, to intercede for him with the Great Shaikh, so that he might be allowed to worship God in a corner. But Shaikh Nizāmuddīn, who even then was contemplating appointing him as his chief Khalīfa or successor at Delhi, would not hear of it. "Tell Nasīruddīn," he told Khusrau, "that he ought to live among the people, submitting to their cruelties and blows and responding to them with humility, generosity and kindness." Of his eminence among the disciples of the Great Shaikh there can be no doubt. Amīr Khurd, the author of the *Siyar ul-Auliyā'*, who passed his early years in the precincts of the Great Shaikh's Jamā'at-Khāna says that "among the disciples of Shaikh Nizāmuddīn Auliyā', Shaikh Naṣīruddīn was like the moon among the stars."

III

Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā' died on 18th Rabī' II, 725 A.H. (March 1325) and his funeral prayers were led by Shaikh Ruknuddīn, grandson of the famous Suhrwardi saint, Shaikh Bahā'uddīn Zakariyya of Multan, who happened to be then at Delhi. Some three months or so before his death,[9] he had at the instance of Amīr Khusrau and others ordered Certificates of Succession (Khilāfat-Nāmas) to be prepared. The first mystic to receive his certificate was Shaikh Quṭbuddin Munawwar, grandson of Shaikh Jamāl of Hansi, the senior disciple of Shaikh Farīduddīn of Ajodhan. Shaikh Nasiruddīn came second, but the Great Shaikh made it clear that precedence in this matter was irrelevant and ordered them to embrace each other. In accordance with the directions of the Great Shaikh, his successors left for various parts of India. Shaikh Burhānuddīn Gharīb went to Gulbarga; Akhī Sirāj, whose descendant, Shaikh Nūr, was to make a great provincial reputation for himself, went back to his native province of Bengal; and Shaikh Qutbuddīn Munawwar retired to Hānsi, where his grandfather was still tenderly remembered. Shaikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd along with a co-successor, Shaikh Shamsuddīn Yaḥyā was left to lead the Great Shaikh's disciples and to continue his traditions at Delhi.

---

(9) The certificates are dated 20th Zilhajja, 724 A.H. They were faired out by Syed Ḥusain. The text of the certificate given to Shaikh Shamsuddīn Yaḥyā is quoted by Amīr Khurd in *Siyar-ul-Auliyā'*?

The Jamā'at-Khāna of the Great Shaikh was claimed by the descendants of his sister by right of inheritance. Shaikh Naṣīruddīn took up his residence in a house where his mausoleum now stands, prepared to face poverty and all other misfortunes. "Today," he told Ḥamid in 1353 A.D., "I have a number of followers and also guests at my meals. But at that time I fasted for one day (without Iftār-food) and then for another day. I had a friend, named Nathu of Patwa. He brought two pieces of bread, God knows whether of māsh or barley. He had placed a little vegetable over one piece and the other piece of bread over it. He untied the cloth in which he had brought them and placed them before me. What a joy it was!.....And how delightful it was when I had no lamp (chirāgh) in my house and no fire (in my kitchen) during the day. The number of my relations was so large that they could have provided for ten persons like me: but I gradually made them understand my mind and they gave up the thought of making any provision for me. If a man of the world came to see me, I would put on the cloak (khirqah) of my Shaikh to hide my poverty."

It was under these conditions that Shaikh Nasiruddin was driven into a conflict with Sultan Mohammad bin Tughlaq.

The matter requires some explanation. "To the mystics of all creeds it is forbidden to associate with kings and government officers," says the apocryphal Malfuzat of Shaikh Fariduddin of Ajodhan. The sentence very neatly expresses the traditions of the Chishtī Silsilah. We find Shaikh Naṣīruddīn at one place making a distinction between what we would now call the Revolutionary State, in which government posts are a means of service, and the Class-State, which is founded on power, domination and the interests of the governing class. But the Revolutionary State, according to him, had only existed during the days of the Prophet and the Pious Caliphs. All political organisations since then have been Class-States, or rather Class-Governments. Now it is one of the primary duties of the mystic to keep away from such a government; for a government servant or a government pensioner will not have a soul which he can call his own. A gift of Nathu of Patwa (God bless him!) is welcome because it is unconditioned. A government gift can never be unconditioned. You cannot, if you are a government servant, search for the Lord with a care-free soul and you are deceiving yourself—and others—if you think you can serve God and Mammon at the same time. The tradition of a century and a quarter in India, and of a much longer period in foreign lands, demanded that the Chishtī Shaikhs should avoid the courts of kings. On the whole, one should be grateful for the fact that Islam came into India through the peaceful immigration of middle-class men and workers, and not as an appanage to the kings, their courtiers, their armies and their harems.

Shaikh Fariduddin had lived at distant Ajodhan, far from the atmosphere of kings and courts, and on the only occasion when he was visited by a high officer, Ghiyāthuddīn Balban

Ulugh Khān (later on, Sulṭān Balban), he absolutely refused a gift of four villages offered by the latter. Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn, living at Delhi, had to face the music but he refused to relax his principles. If high officers came to see him, he did not refuse them an interview. But he was always annoyed. "They waste the time of his Durwesh," he would say. It was with the greatest difficulty that Malik Qara Beg, a high officer of 'Ala'-uddīn, succeeded in inducing the Great Shaikh to go to an audition-party (samā') which the Malik had arranged in his honour. But that was the absolute limit. At a time when the Great Shaikh and his companions were starving, Sulṭān Jalāluddīn sent him the grant of a village as a gift. But he would not accept it and he told his companions that if they wished to leave him, they were welcome to do so. Owing to Amīr Khusrau, who was Jalāluddīn's 'Keeper of the Qur'ān,' and poet-laureate, the Sulṭān developed a desire to see the Shaikh. But the Great Shaikh would not hear of it. "My room has two doors," he said, "if the Sulṭān comes through one door, I will leave by the other." Ultimately, in order to avoid a surprise visit of the Sulṭān, the Great Shaikh left Delhi and went to visit Shaikh Farīd's tomb at Ajodhan.

Sulṭān 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī, a terrible master for the bureaucracy, kept in stern check the Qāḍīs (Judges) and Ṣudūr (guardians of charitable endowments) who drew a salary from his treasury, and the historian Ḍiāuddīn Barnī, writing in the early years of Fīroz Shāh's reign, laments that as 'Alā'uddīn had subjected the judiciary to the executive, that bad custom had continued in succeeding reigns. But though Barnī, himself a disciple of the great Shaikh, forgets the teaching and principles of his master so far as to express his surprise 'that 'Alā'uddīn never called the Great Shaikh to his court or went to see him,' he assures us at the same time that no words ever passed the Ṣultan's lips to which the Shaikh could possibly object. There was, in spite of his indefensible crimes, a deep religious strain in 'Alā'uddīn's mind and he allowed all sorts of religious people in his country to worship their God—and his— in whatever way they liked. He was prepared to help the Chishtī mystics when they were in real need, but except in one case his assistance was not accepted. And where no payment had been made, 'Alā'uddīn demanded no services.

Matters, however, came to a head in the reign of Sulṭān Mubārak Shāh Khiljī Khiḍr Khān, the Sulṭān's elder brother, whom he had ordered to be murdered in cold blood in the Gwalior fort, was a disciple of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn But Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn was not concerned in the struggle of princes and seems to have taken no notice of the affair. Unfortunately an ex-disciple of the Shaikh, who had been trained by the Shaikh in his Jamā'at-Khāna, one Shaikhzāda Jām, wanted to attain to greatness through palace-intrigues and even dreamt of setting himself up as a rival to the Great Shaikh. It was said that Mubārak had obtained the throne through Shaikhzāda Jām's prayers. The Great Shaikh's prayers, of course were not available for such matters; they were the exclusive monopoly of the

poor, the helpless and the oppressed. One thing led to another and the bitterness in Mubārak Shāh's heart increased. He had built a great mosque, the Másjid-i-Mīrī, and wanted the Shaikh to come there for his Friday prayers. But the Shaikh would not hear of it. "The mosque nearest to my house has the greatest claim on me," he remarked and went for his Friday prayers to the Kailugarhi Mosque as before. The Shaikh and the Sultān came together at one assembly—the Siyyum of Maulānā Diāuddīn Rūmī—but though the two accounts we have of the incident are slightly different, it is clear that neither the Shaikh nor the Sultān cared to take any notice of each other. Mubārak Shāh went so far as to station his officers to see that no government servants went to the Shaikh's Jamā'at-Khāna, but Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn ordered the expenditure on his kitchens to be doubled and the crowd of visitors to his Jamā'at-Khāna increased. Hurt to the quick, Mubārak Shāh declared that he would summon the Shaikh by an administrative order, to be executed by force if necessary, on the firse day of the new month. It was a custom in those days, after the new moon had been seen, for all the high officers and distinguished men of the city (Delhi) to assemble at the Palace to congratulate the Sultān. The Great Shaikh, of course, never went, but he used to send his servant, Iqbāl, to represent him: and Iqbāl stood among the greatest officers of the land and congratulated the Sultān. It is not known whether this custom of the Shaikk was an inheritance from the days of 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī; if so, it betokens a great tolerance on the part of that terrible monarch. Mubārak Shbāh, however, had been receiving Iqbāl's congratula-ations during the four years of his reign, but he declared that he would submit to the insult no longer. The Shaikh must come personally, or he would be brought. Of course, kindly intermediaries, anxious to work out a compromise or to find a solution, were not wanting; and there was much coming and going of high officers between the Imperial Palace and the Shaikh's Jamá'at-Khána. But they found the Shaikh adamant; far from accepting a compromise, he would not even condescend to discuss the matter. All he did was to go and pray in tears at his mother's grave. The inmates of the Jamā'at-Khāna waited in fear of the approaching day. But the day never arrived. On the night previous to it, Mubārak Shah was assassinated by the Barwars and his head was thrown amongst the crowd from the roof of the palace.

With the accession of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq, the policy of the Empire once more underwent a revolution. The Sulṭān was a disciple of Shaikh 'Alā'uddīn, a grandson of Shaikh Farīduddīn of Ajodhan. Now Shaikh 'Alā'uddīn had passed his whole life between his house and the mausoleum of his grandfather. Strictly speaking, he enrolled no disciples himself, but gave them caps and garments on behalf of his grandfather after they had been placed on his grave. He also regarded kings and high officers as filth and dirt. When Shaikh Ruknuddīn, on his way to Multan from the Delhi Court, took the trouble of going to Ajodhan, Shaikh 'Alāuddīn would neither ask him to stay nor offer him any hospitality. Shaikh Ruknuddīn, rid-

ing in his litter and followed by his disciples, just caught Shaikh 'Alā'uddīn while he was on his way to his house from the mausoleum of his grandfather, and the latter had no alternative but to embrace Shaikh Ruknuddīn. But on returning to his house, he bathed and changed his clothes. "This man," he said "has brought to my Khānqāh the stench of the Court." No influence of Shaikh 'Alā'uddīn is traceable in the policy of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq. The Sulṭān was very keen on supporting the rationalists (Ahl-i Ma'qulāt) against the traditionists (Ahl-i Manqūlāt). This problem did not interest the mystics and centuries before they had determined to pass it by. Sulṭān Muḥammad was, it has been said, very cruel to the qāḍis and all 'externalist scholars' (Ulamā-i Ẓāhirī) who were in the service of the government. But his attitude towards the mystics was different. He wanted them to march in tune with the imperial policy and to become officers of the state. No Delhi sulṭān was stronger or more powerful than Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tughlaq at the beginning of his reign ; his resources were great, and the annexation of a large part of the Deccan having put plenty of jobs at his disposal, he was in a position to pay handsomely for services rendered. The mystics were required to discard their khirqah (patched frock) for the silken gown and broad waist-band of government officers. The Sulṭān said that he wanted their advice and guidance, but everyone knew that the Sulṭān only wanted discussion in order to have an opportunity of defeating and overpowering his opponents and that in the end he would be guided by his own opinion Still, for the starving mystics, living on the charity of their neighbours, the temptation of a guaranteed livelihood through government service was too great. The elderly mystics, who had starved and prayed for years, were obviously incapable of either directing a campaign or supervising office work. But it was different with young men belonging to distinguished mystic families, who had completed their education but had not yet gone through the prolonged mystic discipline of the Chishti Silsilah. They could shift on to worldly things. For details of personal cases I must refer the reader to the *Siyar ul-Auliyā'* of Amīr Khurd. Almost all the descendants of Shaikh Farīduddīn were enrolled in the imperial bureaucracy; the descendants of Sayyid Maḥmūd Kirmānī, a much-loved disciple of Shaikh Farīduddīn, who had later established themselves round the Jamā'at-Khana of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn, followed the same path. Of the smaller fry there was no reckoning. When years later the Tughlaq Empire in the Deccan and the distant provinces collapsed, most of them were threatened with material and spiritual ruin, as the Great Shaikh had predicted. The historian, Ḍiauddīn Barnī—perhaps representing the majority—was too far gone to recover; the iron of worldly desire had penetrated too deeply into his soul. Others, like Amīr Khurd, came back to the mystic path again. Only three important disciples of the Great Shaikh—Shaikh Shamsuddīn Yaḥyā, Shaikh Quṭbuddīn Munawwar and Shaikh Naṣiruddīn Maḥmūd—ventured to ignore the Sulṭān. The brunt of the strugle fell on Shaikh Naṣiruddīn.

Shaikh Shamsuddīn Yaḥyā, probably the oldest of the great Shaikh's disciples, was summoned to the Sulṭān's court. "What are you doing here?" he was told, "Go and perach Islam among the temples of Kashmir." Now converting non-Muslims was no part of the mission of Chishtī Silsilah: the Great Shaikh himself had made no converts. As Shaikh Shamsuddīn showed no intention of leaving Delhi, the Sulṭān appointed officers to take him to Kashmir. But Shamsuddīn dreamt that the Great Shaikh was calling him to himself. He developed an ulcer in the back. The Sulṭān suspected a trick and ordered Shamsuddīn to be brought on his cot to the court, but on satisfying himself that the man was at death's door, the Sulṭān perforce allowed the Saikh to die peacefully in Delhi.

Shaikh Naṣīruddīn's trial came next. The Sulṭān had collected some 370,000 horsemen for the conquest of Khorāsān. The death of Sulṭān Abū Sa'īd, the last of the Īl-Khāns of Persia, had left no central power in the land and pretenders were succeeding each other in quick succession. The assassination in 727 A.H. (1326 A.D.) of Tarmshīrīn Khān, the last of the Chagtā'i Khāns who wielded any real authority and who at the height of his power had invaded India, had plunged Māwarā-un-Nāhr into civil war. The prospects from this point of view were not bad. But a lot of questions, political and military, could have been asked. Why must you conquer Khorāsān? What good are you going to do there? Can you really establish yourself permanently in that distant land? Will your army not be entirely annihilated in the terrible Dasht (steppe) that divides India from that region because no proper arrangements for conveyance and supply can be made?

But Shaikh Naṣīruddīn had no intention of discussing politics or military affairs when he was summoned to the court to help in the enterprise. The Sulṭān was whipping up public opinion in favour of the campaign and from that point of view Shaikh Naṣīruddīn had his value. But the Sulṭān's plan of summoning the Chishtī Shaikh to the court was a novel idea. Nothing like that happened before. Of course it was impossible to avoid the summons; the Sulṭān would use force, if necessary, as he did, later on, in the case of Shaikh Quṭbuddīn Munawwar [10]

So firmly, with quiet determination and full preparedness to meet the consequences, Shaikh Naṣīruddīn went to the palace determined to insult the Tughlaq Sulṭān as no great Sulṭān of Delhi had been insulted before.

Muḥammad bin Tughlaq, to do him justice, was very anxious to please his guest, quite forgetful of the fact that the Shaikh was not of the stuff that courtiers are made of. He seated Shaikh Naṣīruddīn on his right hand and wished apparently for an opportunity to explain his plans. But the Shaikh was determined not to hear them.

---

(10) Amir Khurd in his *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, tells us how Shaikh Quṭbuddīn was needlessly brought from Hansi to Delhi. The Sulṭān had no alternative but to allow him to return.

"I wish to march in the direction of Khorāsān," the Sulṭān said, "I want you to accompany me."

Inshā'llāh—God willing—" replied the Shaikh. The Sulṭān felt that this reply was really a refusal and complained that the use of this well-known phrase indicated the desire to put off a thing (*Tab'id*).

The Sulṭān and the Shaikh—both of them men of academic learning—quarrelled about the use of this phrase. The atmosphere naturally became unpleasant and the Shaikh brought the altercation to an end by his final declaration. "No enterprise can succeed without the use of this (conditional) declaration. It indicates affirmation, not avoidance."

Puzzled by his guest's attitude, the Sulṭān ordered the midday meal to be served. But if he thought that the Shaikh would consider this an honour, he was mistaken. No Chishtī Shaikh had dined with a Sulṭān before and Shaikh Naṣīruddīn, we are told, extended his hand to the dishes before him with the greatest reluctance.

"Give me some advice on which I may act,' the Sulṭān asked him while they were dining.

Shaikh Naṣīruddīn had no intention of mincing words like his erstwhile acquaintance, the historian-courtier, Ḍiāuddīn Barnī. His reply came pat: "Get rid of this passion of wild beasts which has taken possession of your soul."

The Sultan could have ordered the Shaikh to be beheaded, but he had not called the Shaikh for this purpose and the Shaikh, in any case, had no fear of such an end. The continuation of any conversation, however, was no longer possible.

When the meal was over, Sultan Muhammad ordered a bag of Tankas and two pieces of green and black woollen cloth to be placed before the Shaikh. But the Shaikh paid no attention to the Sultan's presents At that moment a secretary of the Sultan, Khwaja Nizam by name, who was a disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya' and a pupil of Amir Khusrau stepped forward He took up the Shaikh's shoes, placed them before him and then carried the presents outside and assigned them to the Shaikh's servant, obviously for distribution among the Delhi poor. Then placing his forehead on the ground before the Shaikh, he returned to the Sultan.

He found the latter in a towering rage. "You short-statured fellow of a secretary (Dabir-i-Kotah)! What happened to you that you carried the presents of the Shaikh and picked up his shoes in my presence?" Sultan Muhammad's hand went to his sword-hilt.

"Had I not taken up the presents," Khwāja Niẓām, who was also prepared to be a martyr, explained, "the Shaikh would not have touched them and they would have remained lying on your carpet (Dulcha). As for picking up his shoes,

it was an honour for me.' 'If you put me to death, I am willing; it will rid me of the torture of your company.'' Sulṭān Muḥammed, we are told, inflicted no punishment on his erring and insolent secretary.

One man against an Empire ! It was obvious that the underlings of the administration could make the life of a private citizen impossible, and Shaikh Naṣīruddīn had to meet the consequences of his attitude. Firishta records a tradition that Muḥammad Tughlaq decided that the great mystics should render him token services and the duty of tying the Sulṭān's Dastār (turban) before he went to the Durbār was assigned to Shaikh Naṣīruddīn. The Shaikh refused and was thrown into prison, but after three months he reflected that his predecessors had submitted to force in such matters and that he should do the same. I am not inclined to put any trust in this latter-day tradition, but the following incident, which is well authenticated, throws light on the working of the administration.

Khwaja Qiwamuddin, a disciple of Shaikh Nasiruddin, who had entered government service, is said to have declared : "I was faced with a terrible time and subjected to government demands and punishments during those days of my suspension from government service. If I appealed to friends for whom in previous days I had an affection or wished to talk to them, they turned away their faces and would not hear my words. If I sent anything to be sold in the market, no one would purchase it I was helpless and gloomy.'' The only person who would still venture to receive him was Shaikh Nasiruddin. The Shaikh could do nothing for him so far as the administration was concerned; but he could at least extend his human sympathy to the persecuted man whom, from fear of the government, society was boycotting. So Qiwamuddin called at the Shaikh's Jama'at-Khana "But before I could explain the object of my visit," Qiwamuddin continues, "the Shaikh with his usual kindness began to ask me about my affairs and recited the following quatrain :—

دنیا چو مقدر است، نخروشی به
رزق تو رسد بوقت، کم کوشی به
چیزے که نمی خرند، نفروشی به
گفتی که نمی کنند، خاموشی به [11]

"In short the Shaikh by his intuitive mind had discovered my inner thoughts and revealed them to me. I placed my head on the ground. The same ideas which the Shaikh has

(11) The world is predestined, it is better not to make a noise about it. Your livelihood will reach you at the appointed time; better lessen your efforts for it. If people will not purchase something, it is better not to attempt to sell it. If they will not talk to you, it is better to remain silent.

revealed were revolving in my mind; I said, 'The Shaikh's words have given strength and firmness to my heart.'"[12]

Our records give no details of the persecution to which the Shaikh was subjected In his conversation in the *Khair-ul-Majālis*, the Shaikh makes no reference to Muḥammad Tughlaq or even to his life in those days. No rankling bitterness of any sort was left in his mind. Sulṭāns come and go; it is no use bothering about them. God alone is permanent. We have to be content with the following cryptic statement of Amīr Khurd, who was then in government service in the Deccan. "In the beginning of his reign Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tughlaq, who had established his power throughout the length and breadth of India, inflicted injuries on Shaikh Naṣīruddīn, who, according to the general consensus of opinion, was the Shaikh of the age and had the whole world for his obedient disciples But that man of eminent piety, according to the tradition of his Pīrs, considered it his duty to be patient and did not retaliate in any way. 'The Sulṭān persecuted you so much,' they asked him. 'What was the reason?' 'There was an affair between me and my God,' Shaikh Naṣīruddīn replied, 'They settled it like this.'"

Towards the end of his reign when Muḥammad Tughlaq had gone to Thatta in pursuit of Taghi, he needlessly summoned a number of religious men and scholars, among them Shaikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd, from Delhi They had to travel 'a distance of 1,000 Karohs (2 000 miles). It is not necessary to believe with Amīr Khurd that the death of Sulṭān Muḥammad Tughlaq was due to the fact that he did not pay to the scholars and the mystics respect that was their due. Shaikh Naṣiruddīn, a pacifist without reservation, was not one of the cursing (Jalālī) saints The whole of his life may be considered a comment on a line often recited by the Great Shaikh.

هر که او در راه من خارے نهد از دشمنی
هر گلی کز باغ عمرش بشگفدبی خار باد [13]

Sulṭān Muḥammad's death left the army leaderless, and Barnī says that Shaikh Naṣiruddīn was one of the leading men who called on Feroz Shah and requested him to ascend the throne. Like his friend, Shaikh Qutbuddin Munawwar,[14] he could have had no illusions about that pom-

(12) Amīr Khurd, who was then in the Deccan, relates the incident on the authority of a common friend, named Kafūr.

(13) He who puts thorns in my path out of enmity—May every rose of his life that blossoms grow without thorns.

(14) Shams Sirāj 'Afīf, *Tārīkh-i-Feroz Shāhī*, pp. 78–82.
On his way from Sind to Hansi, Feroz Shāh called on Shaikh Qutbuddin just when the Shaikh came out of his house to go for the Friday prayers. The Shaikh was naturally irritated. Was he to serve His Majesty or to go to

pous ruler, who was destined to bring the Empire of his predecessors to ruin. But with the army attacked by the Sindhis on one side and the Mongols on the other, the immediate election of a king was absolutely necessary, and Feroz Shah was the best of a number of bad alternatives. Barni does not refer to any further contacts between the Sultan and the Shaikh and the stories set afloat about the relation of the Shaikh and the Sultan and his officers in later days must be dismissed as mere fabrications. Though the Conversations of the Shaikh do not refer to Feroz Shah by name—he was not worth mentioning—they contain a scathing criticism of the condition of the country during the regime of Feroz Shah and his officers. A person who spoke so fearlessly could hardly have been in touch with the Sultan and the bureaucracy.

IV

On returning to Delhi in 1353 A.D. Shaikh Nasiruddin once more took to his old profession—the profession of a Shaikh or Fann-i-Shaikhī, as Barnī calls it. There were, of course, great religious scholars who basked in the royal favour; but though Shaikh Nasiruddin, like his predecessors, had to face the criticism of a large city, as a leader of religious life he had no rival in India. His Jamā'at-Khāna was crowded with every kind of visitor from morning to night, and it seemed as if the Great Shaikh had come to life again. Shaikh Nasīruddīn had no material favours to bestow, but his Jamā'at-Khāna was a spiritual refuge for all Amīr Khurd, having lost his job in the Deccan and anxious that his spiritual life should not perish along with material prosperity, found that the influence of the Shaikh once more brought him to the right path "I remember," he says, "hearing my uncle, Saiyid Husain, declaring that 'today the high position of Shaikh Niẓāmuddin Auliyā is occupied by Shaikh Nasiruddin Maḥmūd. Outwardly and inwardly, so far as is possible, he does not deviate from the path of the great Shaikh In this work he has surpassed all other disciples of the great Shaikh and attained to perfection.'" His personal contact with the Shaikh confirmed the truth of his uncle's assertions. "The fragrance which used to emanate from the Majlis (company) of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn has also come to the soul of the author from the Majlis of Shaikh Naṣīruddīn and has revived his dead soul after more than thirty years. Mystics who

---

his Friday prayers? Still, talking to Feroz Shāh while standing, he asked the Sultān to give up drinking as it interfered with the performance of his responsible and delicate duties as the head of the State and not to kill, while hunting, more animals than were required for food. It was clear from Feroz's attitude that he had no intention of changing his ways of life. On the second occasion of their meeting, Feroz ordered a fine silk dress to be presented to Shaikh Quṭbuddin. The latter flatly refused it as wearing silk dress is not permitted to Musalmans.

Shaikh Nasiruddin, who was moving with the camp, met his old friend in the mystic manner (pp. 82-87).

have seen the Majlis of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn and appreciated its deep significance agree with this proposition." A little after the death of Shaikh Naṣīruddīn in 757 A.H (1356 A.D.) Amīr Khurd penned the following lines: "The external and internal devotions of this dignitary are more than the pen can describe. Those who have had the honour of kissing his feet have realised that his countenance was the picture of perfect piety. Towards the end of his life his work reached perfection; he became a pure soul. When I saw this miracle, I said to myself: 'Since he has reached perfection, it would be strange if they allowed such a pure existence to remain in this world.' "[15]

Fortunately for us, a scholar calling himself Hamid the Qalandar, son of Maulānā Tājuddīn of Kailugarhi, presented himself at the Shaikh's Jamā'at Khānā and offered to compile his Conversations (Malfuzat) even as Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī had compiled the great Shaikh's Conversations in the *Fawā'idūl-Fawā'id.* Both Maulānā Tājuddīn and his son, Ḥamid, were disciples of the Great Shaikh, who had on one occasion said to the father: "Your son will be a Qalandar." So Ḥamid when he grew up shaved off his beard"—an intolerable worldly burden,—" and also shaved his head, moustaches and eye-brows, and put on the saffron garb of the Qalandars. He had, of course, nothing to do with the Qalandars, properly so-called, and knew little about them. Like many others he had left for the Deccan, attached himself to Shaikh Burhānuddīn Gharīb' and began to compile his Conversations.[16] But his work could not be completed owing to that Shaikh's death in Feb. 1341, and twelve years later Ḥamid offered to render the same service to Shaikh Naṣīruddin. The offer was gratefully accepted. Ḥamid compiled a record of one hundred Conversations or *Majlises* of the Shaikh and named it *Khairul-Majālis.* "I have narrated things correctly," says Ḥamid, "and Shaikh Naṣīruddīn has revised my work. From the beginning to the end there is not a word that has not received the consideration and approval of the Shaikh and has not been spoken by him." After the Shaikh's death Ḥamid added a Supplement to the *Khairul-Majālis* giving a sketch of the Shaikh's life. Shaikh Naṣīruddīn obviously kept his biographer under stern control and insisted that he should be presented to posterity as a religious teacher and not as a miracle-monger. "He never tried," Ḥamid complains at the end of his Supplement, "that anyone should consider him a great man. He has suppressed his ego to such an extent that if I call him a Shaikh, he is not pleased; and if I attribute miracles to him, he resents it and begins to reflect."

The *Khairul-Majālis* is a worthy successor of the *Fawā'idūl-Fawā'id*, but it is a work of inexpressible sadness I

(15) Amir Khurd; *Siyar-ul-Auliya'*, Section on Shaikh Nasiruddin.

(16) Ḥamid showed the incomplete volume to Shaikh Nasiruddin. 'Durwesh! You have written well, the Shaikh remarked as he read it.' The work has not survived.

confess that I can never read it without tears. But this sadness is due to the Shaikh and not to Ḥamid, who loved the innocent joys of life and seems to have been blessed with plenty of vivacity. He composed verses like every one else, and so long as they rhymed, he could enjoy them without bothering about their quality. His Qalandarship, apart from the fact that he never married and had no personal property, was only a pose. "I am a Qalandar in appearance," he says at one place, "but I associate with mystics." It was different with Shaikh Naṣīruddīn. The sorrows of all mankind were reflected in his heart.

I. A mystic, who merely prays, whatever the quality of his prayers and whatever his spiritual stature, is not, correctly speaking, entitled to be called a Shaikh. To be a Shaikh a mystic had to live and work among the people, to sympathise with their sorrows, to partake of their joys and to teach them the principles of mystic and religious life Occasionally he might be able to help them financially and in other ways, but this was the exception rather than the rule; for the Shaikh, if true to his principles, could not generally approach high officers for any favours to his disciples. Many stories are told of the presents that came to the Great Shaikh, but the fact is that they never sufficed. "Gifts flowed into the Jamā'at-Khāna of Shaikh Niẓamūddīn Auliyā' like the waters of the Labia (a branch of the Jumna) that flowed before it," Shaikh Naṣīruddīn tells us, "People came from morning to sunset and even at the time of the night prayer. But those who came with requests always exceeded those who came with gifts, and everyone who brought something also got something."[17] Shaikh Naṣīruddīn, though he seems to have been the recipient of sufficient gifts, was not so fortunate and he did not consider it a part of his duty to be the collector and distributor of money. "The head of a (mystic) community," he says, "needs three things. *First*, Wealth, so that he may be able to give to people whatever they ask. The Qalandars of these days demand Sherbet If a Durwesh has nothing how is he to givea nything ?' And then they go out abusing him and are punished for it on the Day of Judgment *Secondly*, Learning, so that if scholars come to him he can discuss academic matters with them. *Thirdly*, Cosmic Emotion (Jazba), so that he may be able to inspire the Durweshes. But I say: 'Wealth is not necessary. Learning and the Cosmic Emotion are enough.'"

A Shaikh's means of work were thus purely spiritual, and the precondition of all his work was the possession of the Nafs-i-gira or the 'intuitive intelligence.' He must, first, be able to enter into the heart of every man and this was only possible if he had great, unbounded human sympathies. Secondly, his experience should be wide enough to enable him to understand all classes and conditions of men. The

(17) *Khair-ul-Majalis*, LXXXVI. Unlike Amir Ḥasan Sijzi, Ḥamid does not give the dates of Conversations or Majlises but merely numbers them.

early mystics had recommended travelling as a means of spiritual development. But the Chishti mysics. after settling in India, gave up the habit of travelling. Shaikh Farid never went out of India. The Great Shaikh's peregrinations were limited by three points—Badaun, Delhi and Ajodhan. But the City of Delhi, with its teeming population, could show him all that he wanted to see of human life. Shaikh Naṣiruddīn, apart from his compulsory journey to Sind, only travelled from Ajodya (Oudh) to Delhi and back. Unlike the Suhrwardis, the Chishtis did not indulge in needles travelling. The third element the 'intelligential' is hard to define. It was a Divine gift; it could be developed but not acquired by one who had not been endowed with it by nature.

Whether his visitors spoke of their sorrows or not, the Shaikh would be able to understand them. Inevitably his own mind would also be affected by their stories of misfortune and woe, told or untold. The Great Shaikh, on being informed that in a particular company they had praised the inner calmness of his mind, declared: "No one in this world is more sad and gloomy than I am. So many people come and tell me of their misfortunes and it all pierces into my soul and and my heart. It would be a strange heart that was not affected by the sorrows of his Muslim brothers. And then a great City with a large population! Durweshes have sought refuge in the hills and the deserts in the desire that no one may come to put the burden of his heart upon them."[18] It was the same with Shaikh Naṣīruddīn. "A visitor who comes to me," he told Ḥamid, "is either a worldly man or a mystic. If he is a worldly man, his heart is attached to earthly things. When he enters (my room) and my eyes fall upon him I ask him about his affairs Even if he is silent, everything in his mind is reflected in my heart, and I am overpowered with sadness and gloom ....[19] And others come terror-stricken and demand: 'Hurry up and do this.' (If I don't), they speak evil of me and are insolent. The Durwesh should be patient under all circumstances."[20]

II. Of course people were not wanting who wished to utilise the Shaikh for their worldly needs, but Shaikh Naṣīruddīn would not waver from the mystic path of Tawakkul or resignation. I have only space for two cases.

"A Durwesh came," Ḥamid records in Majlis XLV. "Some one had been cruel to him. The Shaikh said, 'Durwesh, be patient. If they are cruel to you, behave like a Durwesh, and forgive them.'" He related a pertinent story of Hazrat Ibrāhīm Adham, but seeing that the Durwesh was still dissatisfied, he aded: 'The path of the Durwesh is what I have explained; otherwise you know best.' "

---

(18) *K. M.*, XXXI.

(19) My copy of the *Khair ul-Majālis* is not clear at this place.

(20) *K. M.*, XXXI.

But others would not allow themselves to be dismissed so easily On another occasion Ḥamīd records:[21]

"When the Shaikh had completed this story, a mystic came. He was a disciple of my Pīr, Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā.' As soon as he sat down, he began to complain bitterly of the times. This is not the tradition of the Shaikhs of my Silsilah I was surprised. What has happened to this Durwesh? Nevertheless Shaikh Naṣīruddīn, with the virtues that should belong to a mystic, heard him and gave suitable replies.

"The visitor then related the following anecdote: 'Once a friend of mine, who was a disciple of Shaikh Farīduddin, came to Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā'. 'I am the father of girls,' he said, 'Do something for me.'[22] 'Go and be patient,' the Great Shaikh replied: 'Shaikh!' he said, 'If you had one unmarried daughter, you would realise my distress.' 'What do you want me to do?' 'Recommend me to somebody.' At that moment the grandson of Ẓafar Khān[23] happened to come and the Great Shaikh spoke to him. 'I have a flat (Serāi) available in my house,' the latter replied, 'Please ask the Maulānā to come and put up there. I will be at his service.' 'Now go, Maulānā,' the Great Shaikh ordered. The Maulānā went (to Zafar Khān's house) and his life was happy thereafter.'

"Shaikh Naṣīruddīn on hearing this remarked, 'Maulānā! In those days there were plenty of disciples. To whom can one speak now? One should be patient.'

"I know that one should be patient and not complain," the Durwesh replied, 'But today you are in the place of my Shaikh and it is permissible that I should speak to you of the sorrows of my heart. I have a slave-boy, who works as a labourer I give him two-thirds of his wages and keep one-third for myself.'"[24]

III. Like his great master, Shaikh Nasīruddīn also condemned government service, but also like his master he seems to have made a distinction. Government servants who were in the clerical line and had nothing to do with the policy of the administration were entitled to be enrolled as mere disciples like Amir Hasan Sijzi and Amīr Khusrau But the Shaikh insisted that the higher spiritual achievements were not within the reach of such people. "Amīr Ḥasan and

---

(21) *Ibid.*

(22) Probably referring to the Ḥadis ابو البنات مرزوقون (The fathers of girls shall have their livelihood).

(23) Zafar Khān was Sulṭān 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī's Minister of War ('Ariz-i-Mumālik) during the early years of his reign. He died while fighting against the Mongols at Kili—a place not far from Delhi—after he had defeated them and was following in pursuit.

(24) *K. M.*, XXV. From various instances of the time it appears that this was the usual arrangement; the slave kept two-thirds of his wages and gave one-third to his master.

Amīr Khusrau," he says, passing a severe but just judgment on his deceased friends, "wished to compose (poetry) after the manner of Khwāja Sa'dī. It proved impossible What Sa'dī has written is due to the Cosmic Emotion (Sar-i-Hal). Khāqanī and Niẓāmī were men of piety. But Khwāja Sanā'i was one of the hermits (Muqatī'an) and had completely severed his relations with the world and the people of the world."[25]

But on the plan of ordinary discipleship he had no objection to such people. At one place we find him approving the work of an educated visitor, who declared: "I sit in the Diwan the whole day, and they consult me about the procedure of every order that is passed.[26] At another place we find him considering whether he should enrol among his disciples a clerk (Newīsanda) who was a Saiyid. a Hāfiz. and a man of devotions, and deciding the case in the affirmative "Government service will be no obstacle in his path," he decided. "He will be a mystic on account of his devotion."[27]

It was different, however, with the great executive officers of the government. Two examples should suffice.

1. "An educated man with the respects of a Malik,[28] who was in trouble and said, 'He is being kicked on account of government demands.' The Shaikh observed, 'Government service bears such fruit. especially in these times. In the early days (of Islām) all officers were more devoted to the service of God than to the affairs of this world and most of them had attained to the stature of Shiblī and Junaid '"[29]

2 "There came, next, to the Shaikh a great man of this world. He had heen imprisoned and, appealing to the Shaikh, had been set free owing to his prayers. The Shaikh felt very happy. 'Welcome,' he said, 'Congratulations! Please sit down.' 'Owing to the blessings of the Shaikh,' he replied, 'they set me free last night.' 'If a thorn pricks a man's foot or an ant bites it,' the Shaikh observed significantly, 'he ought to know that it is the result of his own acts. *And no misfortunes shall befall you except what your hands have earned*.'"[30]

At another place he observes: "When people obtain a little worldly office, they treat the people of God as they like and are not afraid of wounding the hearts of men. After all, the sighs of the oppressed have some effect."[31]

(25) *K. M.*, XLIV.

(26) *K. M.*, XXV.

(27) *K. M.*, LXVIII.

(28) Malik in those days was an officer who commanded one thousand men or more. If he commanded ten thousand men (a Tūmān), he was a Khān.

(29) *K. M.*, XXV.

(30) *K. M.*, LXI. The last sentence is a quotation from the Qur'an.

(31) *K. M.*, XXXI

We find many instances of persons not in government service—businessmen, traders, farmers, school-teachers—coming to the Shaikh. He asked them to be honest in the pursuit of their callings, and if they did so, their livelihood would be blessed. "It is a virtuous morsel—the cultivation of the land," he declared on one occasion, "Many farmers have been men of mystic emotion." And he proceeded to recapitulate what a farmer told the great Imâm, Ghazzâlī: "I scatter the seeds on the soil with a contented heart and a tongue reciting the praises of the Lord. My hope is that every one who eats of the produce will be blessed, and will expend the strength he gets from it in obedience to the Almighty.'"[32]

IV. Since the Revolutionary State of the mystic dream—a state that would concentrate all its energies on the service of 'the people of God'—was not within the region of practical politics, the Shaikh ignored the king and the bureaucracy of the day and declared that happiness was to be found in the mystic path alone. "Happiness is only found in the house of religious poverty." He told a visitor who had come to ask for his prayer concerning his application which was pending official consideration, "In the house of worldly men, there is only sorrow and sadness. There is, of course, sorrow and sadness in religious poverty (Faqr)[33] also but it is due to the search for the Absolute (Ḥaq), not to the affairs this world; and, in consequence of this sadness, there is joy and delight. *The Prophet of Allāh (blessings on him !) was a man of prolonged sadness and deep reflections.*"[34]

Nevertheless in his middle age, the Shaikh had seen something of a well-organised state in the state-capitalism and controlled-capitalism of 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī, 'when every beggar, in Delhi (as he tells us) had a quilt (Liḥāf, Bibancha) or even two.' But now government and society—even mystic society—were falling to pieces. The sight scared the Shaikh's soul.

'"In these days,' he declared, 'Durweshes have decreased. In the time of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn (and 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī) twenty or thirty Durweshes—real seekers—could be found (in Delhi) Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn would invite them as his guests for three days. What days were those !' The Shaikh recollected the plenitude and cheapness of those days—a man of wheat for 7½ Jītals,[35] of sugar for half a Dirham, of Gur for less then a Jītal, and the price of cloth and other commodities in the same proportion. 'If a man

(32) *K. M.*, XLVIII.

(33) From the mystic view-point a *faqir* has been defined as "a man who possesses nothing and is possessed by nothing." He is the 'free man,' properly so called.

(34) *K. M.*, XXXI.

(35) *Jītal* is the copper coin of those days. The silver coin, the ancestor of the rupee of the Mughal Empire and succeeding ages, was called Tankah.

wished to invite a number of friends to a feast, two to four Tankhas would provide enough food for all.' Then he referred to the Langars (free kitchens) of those days in the City and its environs—the Langar of Ramzan Qalandar, Malik Yar Parran and some others... .....'Shaikh Badruddīn Samarqandī,[36] who lies buried at Sankolah, was a friend of Shaikh Nizāmuddīn. He often came to Shaikh Nizāmuddīn and the Shaikh went to see him in return. Shaikh Badruddīn was often invited to feasts ; people considered his presence a blessing. He was a man of ecstasy. At the Urs (annual death-festival) of his Pīr, Shaikh Badruddīn used to invite all the army-commanders (Lashkardārān), and Durweshes also came from all sides. What joy and comfort, blessing and grandeur! Now neither those army-commanders, nor officers nor men are left. All have been ruined !'...The Shaikh's eyes were filled with tears of memory and he wept or a little while."[37]

To understand this passage we must study the so-called 'Reforms' of Feroz Tughlaq and bear in mind the increasing power of the bureaucracy, which the Sultān was unable to control. "What a time is this with which we are faced," the Shaikh observed. "If the world smiles on anyone, that man will turn his back on others, and will not permit anyone to share his good fortune. Though he may know his neighbour to be poor and starving, yet the smell of his food will not reach his neighbour. Such is our generation."[38] But one section of this decomposing society still maintained its old ideals and standards—the student-community. "The students of those days were good," declared Shaikh Naṣīruddin, "but students of these days are good also."[39] And again : "All students of those days were pious, but most students of these days have also a good deal of piety."[40] Students always found a warm welcome in the Jamā'at-Khāna of the Shaikh, especially senior students who had studied the Mashāriq of Maulānā Razīuddīn Sanānī (or Chighani), the most reliable collection of the Prophet's *Hadīses* (Sayings), the *Zamikhsharī* of the Mu'tazilite, *Kashshāf*, which though condemned by the orthodox for its heretical opinions, had to be studied non-the-less for its sound scholarship along with the *Nahv-i-Mufaṣṣal* of the same author. The Shaikh, in spite of his old age, liked discussing academic problems with students and they took advantage of the opportunity of asking him to explain the difficulties of their text-books. This was the only silver lining to the cloud. The century that followed was not destined to have any political achievements to its credit. But in the realm of scholarship and religious thought the fifteenth century of Indian history is unrivalled.

(36) A Shaikh of the Firdausi Silsilah.
(37) *K. M.*, LV.
(38) *K. M.*, LXV.
(39) *K. M.*, LXV.
(40) *K. M.*, LXXVII.

V

Primarily the melancholy and sadness of the Shaikh's 'Conversations' are due to the misery of the world around him But we must not forget the purely personal element. He was ageing Add to this that he was expected to follow the time-table of Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyā, which left no time for rest or sleep. The Shaikhs of earlier days, as Shaikh Niẓāmuddīn himself told Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī, only received visitors between the Ishrāq and Zuhr-prayers; but the Great Shaikh refused to adhere to this custom and would see anyone at any time he cared to come. As a result, the stream of visitors left him barely enough time for his prayers. It was a tradition of the mystics that they should devote the time between midnight and morning to their prayers; but since sleep is necessary for life and health, they generally set aside some other time for their sleep. Shaikh Jalāluddīn Tabrezī, a disciple of Shaikh Shahābuddīn Suhrwardī, who passed across northern India in the time of Iltutmish, used to sleep between the Ishrāq and Chāsht-prayers. Shaikh Najmuddīn Kubra, the founder of the Firdausi Silsilah, used to go to sleep immediately after sunset (Maghrib) prayer and used to wake up in time for his 'Ishā' prayer just before midnight. But the Great Shaikh would nor follow their example, He locked himself up in his room after the 'Ishā' prayer, but people saw his light burning throughout the night, and when the servant of the Khānqāh knocked with his Saḥirī in the early hours of the morning—for the Great Shaikh fasted throughout the year—he would find him wide awake. The whole day he talked to visitors of all sorts, and the only sleep he got was a short midday nap. But very often his visitors left no time for that even. I will not undertake to say how far mystic devotion can be a substitute for sleep, but the Great Shaikh's eyes were always red, and though he lived to an advanced age, he was always ill. "The Great Shaikh," Shaikh Naṣīruddin tells us, "was always suffering from something or other—stomach-ache due to wind in the bowels (Khula'), fever, headache (Ṣadā') or piles. He was never well. Once in the midst of an audition party (Sama'), he was overcome and paralysed by stomach-ache."[41]

Shaikh Naṣīruddin, in his old age, naturally found it difficult to follow the time-table of his master. Ḥamid tells us that, calling on the Shaikh early in the morning, he would find him broken (Shikasta) in spirit; on one occasion the words he spoke were quite unintelligible to Ḥamīd.[42] The following conversation betweee him and Ḥamīd throws some light on what the Shaikh felt:

"After this the Shaikh heaved a sigh. 'I and you—we are like the hungry Durwesh who passes before the shop of a cook, sees fine food prepared and smells it He stops and says: 'At least those who have the food should eat it.' Now I have no time for devotions or solitude. I have to interview people all the day, and have no time for my midday rest

(41) *K. M.*, LXXXVI.

(42) *K. M.*, XIX.

(Qailūla) even. Very often I wish to rest at midday, but they wake me up and say, a visitor has come. Get up.' You (Ḥamid) have leisure, why do you not give yourself to devotions?

" 'The Khwāja,' I replied, 'though apparently busy (conversing) with men, is in his heart engaged with God.' "

" 'At night,' he said, 'I can find some time for devotions, study and prayer. But during the day nothing is possible. Still I do not give up hope."

"This he said in despair (Shikastawar) and wept Then he recited the line: *"The basket which I have lowered into the well I am not in despair that it will come out quite full one day."*

Sometime after the *Khair-ul-Majālis* had been compiled, a curious attempt to assassinate or wound the Shaikh was made by a Qalandar named Ṭurab According to Ḥamid, the Shaikh as usual said his Zuhr prayer in the Jamā'at-Khāna and then retired to his room for his devotions. It was the time of afternoon rest and the few inmates in the Khānqāh were either away in the City or resting. Finding the Shaikh alone, Turab entered his room with a knife and inflicted eleven wounds on him. The Shaikh remained motionless, and it was not till his blood flowed out of the water-hole of the room, that his disciples began to suspect something On entering the room they found the Qalandar stabbing the Shaikh. They would have punished him on the spot, but the Shaikh would permit nothing of the kind. Determined to add generosity to forgiveness, he summoned one of his favourite disciples, Qāḍī 'Abdul-Muqtadir of Thaneswar, along with a physician, Shaikh Sadruddin, and his nephew Zainuddin 'Alī, and asked them to administer an oath to his disciples that they would not seek to harm the Qalandar. "I hope your knife has not injured your hand," he asked the latter, and presenting him with twelve Tankas, advised him to fly off as soon as possibe. The ways of the medieval Qalandars were strange and inexplicable, and since the Shaikh himself would permit no investigation, it is useless speculating now on Turāb and his motives.

Some three years after this incident, Shaikh Naṣīruddīn breathed his last on Ramaḍān 18, 757 A.H. (1356 A.D.).

It is not correct to say that Shaikh Naṣīruddīn gave no Certificates of Succession. Ḥamid, for example, tells us of the Certificate he gave to Maulānā Ḥīsāmuddīn and the instructions with which it was accompanied. But people naturally expected that like the Great Shaikh he would distribute a number of Succession-Certificates before his death to his disciples who had been anxiously waiting for them and, in particular, that he would appoint a successor for Delhi who would also be the senior saint of the Silsilah. His nephew, Zainuddīn 'Alī, appealed to him to appoint such a successor so that his spiritual line might not come to an end. The Shaikh asked him to draw up a list of the persons whom he considered worthy of the honour. But when Zainuddīn drew

up a list in order of merit and placed it before the Shaikh for consideration, the Shaikh simply refused to consider it. "Maulānā Zainuddīn!" he said, "They have to bear the burden of their own faith; it is not possible for them to bear the burden of others." The great line of all-India Chishtī saints, which had started with Shaikh Mo'īnuddīn of Ajmer, was thus brought to an end. The future Chishtī saints—and there were many of them—could not attain to anything beyond a provincial reputation.

"After making this observation," Ḥamid continues, "Shaikh Naṣiruddīn made the following will: 'At the time of my burial, place the Khirqah I have received from Shaikh Nizāmuddīn on my breast, lay the staff of my master in my grave by my side; the rosary of my Shaikh is to be wound round my forefinger and his wooden bowl is to be placed under my head instead of the (Usūal) clod of earth. His wooden shoes are to be placed by my side.' The persons present acted according to this will. Sayyid Muḥammad Gaisu Darāz washed Shaikh Naṣīruddīn's body. He then took out the twisted ropes from the cot on which he had washed the Shaikh's body and wound them round his neck. 'This is a sufficient Khirqāh for me,' he declared."

THE GENESIS AND PROGRESS OF MUSLIM SOCIO-POLITICAL THOUGHT

—H. K. SHERWANI

THE BACKGROUND

ONE of the most remarkable phenomena of history is the great outburst of research in all branches of science, mundane as well as spiritual, and the love of adventure and exploration which is noticeable almost immediately after the death of the Apostle of Islam. What seems so miraculous is that the Arabs of the desert, with their centrifugal bent of mind and their belief in tribal deities,[1] should be so transformed that they should become the agents of a great civilization and should help to fulfil Muhammad's prophecy that no palace of stone and no thatched hovel would be left where the glory of the one God would not reach.[2] The new culture which emanated from the country which had been disdainfully omitted from their programmes of conquest by all the great conquerors of Asia and Europe, humbled the civilizations of Iran in the East and Byzantium in the West and so completely Arabicised the nomads of Central Asia and North Africa that they learned to write in Arabic in a style unsurpassed even by the Arabs themselves. Their names, their ideas, their law, their very life became moulded in the Islamic mould. No frontier, no border could keep them from going to the furthest ends of the earth known to them, and it is related that when the Arab Commander 'Aqabah ibn Nāfi' reached the Moroccan coast of the Atlanatic he cried out that if he knew that there was

(1) For the tribal deities of per-Islamic Arabs see A. Yusuf 'Ali's *Translation of the Qur'an*, appendix 13, p. 1619.

(2) *Mishkatu'l-Masabih*, Delhi edition, 1933, p. 16.

a land beyond that expanse of water he would not stop but would spur his steed right into the ocean so that he might preach the gospel of unity among the peoples of the new lands.[3] Later generations of Muslims made researches in the Natural Sciences, Jurisprudence, Philosophy, Historiography, the useful as well as the theoretical arts and the science of administration. Thus we find giants like al-Rāzi and Ibn Sina in medicine, Alberūni and 'Umar-i-Khayyām in astronomy, al-Ṭabari and Ibn Khaldūn in historiography, and further west there were the Hispano-Muslims, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Tufail and Ibn Bajjah

Acquisition of Knowledge in Islam

What was the secret of this metamorphosis of the Arabs and this love of research among the Muslims in general? The apparent miracle may be traced to a number of verses in the Qur'ān itself. The very first verse revealed to the Prophet begins with the magic word 'Iqra' or "read," and goes on to say that God taught man through the agency of the mystic pen what he never knew previously.[4] In the *sūrah* which is believed to be the second ever revealed is also mentioned the Pen and that which men write.[5] Again, when God creates the human progenitor He teaches him the potential of all knowledge,[6] and this has been mentioned in

(3) See Scott, *History of the Moorish Empire in Europe*, ch. 3. Another instance of the adventurous spirit of early Muslims would be found in the case of the occupation of Provence by just twenty Hispano-Muslims in 889, and thence the colonization of the Dauphine, a part of Switzerland and of Piedmont, all of which remained in Muslim hands right upto 975. See Reinaud, *Incursions des Sarrazinss en France*, etc., ch. 3; English translation by H. K. Sherwani, *Islamic Culture*, January, 1931, pp. 71 ff.

(4) *Qur'an*, xcvi, 1.

(5) *Ibid.*, lxviii, 2.

(6) *Ibid*, ii, 31.

the Qur'ān, perhaps to impress on the unlettered Arab—and the unlettered human beings the world over—the great need of probing into the mysteries of the Universe, for that was what man was meant to do. Muslims are ordered to understand the Qur'ān,[7] and those who do not do so are given a mild rebuke.[8] Research in the mysteries of the Earth and the "Heights" is said to open out the signs of God's greatness,[9] and even the so-called dogmas like the Unity of Godhead are put to reason and proof.[10] Then again, almost every collection of Hadith contains traditions of the Prophet extolling the possession of *'Ilm* or knowledge, the most important collection, that of al-Bukhari, containing nearly a hundred traditions in which knowledge of different patterns is held up as one of the prerequisites of Islam.[11]

The Islamic Concept of the State

We are here concerned mainly with the development of socio-political thought, and we find that in this case there were no pre-Islamic traditions which could form the basis of such a speculation. Mecca was governed by a kind of decemvirate whose sole function was to preserve the integrity of the city and of the Ka'bah and to cater for the comfort of the pilgrims who gathered there. As a matter of fact, centrifugal tendencies were eating into the very foundations of society in Arabia generally and Mecca in particular. Muhammad changed the very psychology of the Arabs in a short space of time and rescued them "from the

(7) *Ibid*, xii, 1,2.

(8) *Ibid*, xlvii, 24.

(9) *Ibid*. xlv, 1–5. "The Earth and the Heights" (*Sama', Samawat*) is used to express the whole Universe in the Qur'an.

(10) The Qur'an is full of arguments on the existence of God and His unity. This may be contrasted with the writing of certain early Christian Fathers like St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153) who upheld that Faith was above Reason.

(11) *Al-Bukhari*, Delhi edition 1321 H., Vol. 1, pp. 14–25.

mouth of an abyss full of fire"[12] knitting the most warring elements into a solid whole. It was impossible that his efforts should not have an impact upon society in general and what we call the "body-politic" in particular.

The principles on which the state as it was evolved from the first pledge of 'Aqabah[13] to its final foundation at Medina were fourfold. The first thing to remember is that this state was based not upon force but on a series of contracts beginning with the contract with the representatives of the Yethribites in 620 A.C followed by the contract of Muwakhât on reaching Medina and ending in the contract with the Jews which led to what is sometimes called the first written constitution in the history of the world.[14] The second principle on which Islamic polity was built up was that of the most complete equality of man and his obedience to the laws of nature embodied in the Word of God. This was a direct consequence of the principle of the Unity of Godhead which was accepted without any reserve whatever. The whole life of man from conception in the mother's womb to his death is uniform and this is brought out in a single verse of the Qur'ân.[15] When all men are born alike and their organs function alike, when they have to bow to the will of God as embodied in the laws of nature, it would be unnatural to divide them into classes[16] and a most

(12) For pre-Islamic Arabia in general and Mecca in particular see Sherwani, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration*, 2nd edition, Ch. I.

(13) 620, for this see Ibn Hisham, *Sirat*, Wustenfeld edition, Goettingen, 1858, Vol. 1, part 1, p. 85.

(14) *Ibid.*, pp. 341, 344,

(15) *Qur'an*, xxiii 12–14,

(16) Tribes and clans are meant only for the purpose of distinguishing men from one another; *Qur'an*, xlix, 13. The impact of Islam on the non-Muslim countries of the west can be gleaned from the declaration of William the Conqueror of England in 1070. William, with the counsel of his barons, caused 12 men chosen from each country to take an oath to make known the provisions of their

perfect uniformity of status would follow. The third principle on which Islamic political society is based is that of the peculiar concept of property inculcated by Islam and put into practice by the Prophet and his immediate successors. All dominion vests in God[17] and every person holds property in trust for God, however highly placed he might be. He has and can have no "property rights" as we understand them. He is entitled merely to the usufruct of what he holds and God has the power (which He exercises before our very eyes) to change even the possession of things from one person to another.[18] The whole conduct of the Prophet, even after practically the whole of Arabia lay at his feet, is evidence of the fact that he never considered anything as his private property but regarded God as the *cestui que trust* and himself as a mere trustee.

---

leges and consuetudines *in a straight path* turning neither to the right nor to the left.......changing nothing by working *crookedly*. "Straight path" is the direct translation of الصراط المستقيم and the crooked path is those of الضالين of the *Qur'an* i, 5,7. The declaration is copied verbatim, in Stubbs, *Select Charters*, p. 81 and is translated in McIlwain, *Growth of Political Thought in the West*, p. 193. Here it might be noted that there is a coin of the Anglo- Saxon King Offa of Mercia (757–796) with the Islamic creed, *Kalimah* and the Hijri date, 157, embossed on it; for its photograph see Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 316.

(17) For this see *Qur'an*, iii, 26, 108, 189; ix, 120; xv, 23, etc. McIlwain, *op. cit.*, p. 162 and 163 says that to the Christian Fathers during the Middle Ages the only natural condition of holding property was "common ownership and individual use. The world was made for the common benefit of mankind......At most it is only the use of property that a man can rightly have and this should be restricted to his proper needs and limited by his needs." This comes very near the Islamic doctrine of trust.

(18) Nicholas of Cues (11th century) says that all earthly power proceeded primarily from God, but a God-inspired will of the community was the organ of Divine manifestation. See Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, Maitland's English translation, pp. 22, 34. With this compare the methods adopted for the election

Some of the basic principles of the Islamic State are, therefore, monocentricity, equality, the contractual basis of the state and the theory of trust. It is remarkable that, according to the belief of a very large majority of Muslims throughout the centuries which have elapsed since Islam was first preached, Muhammad did not appoint any successor to his high office, but left it to the choice of electors. As time, however, elapsed, those who had been the companions of the Prophet died out The practices of the time of the Prophet were fast receding from man's memory and the elective Caliphate soon gave place to the nomination of the Caliph's son as successor after the fashion of the Roman Caesars leading finally to succession by the right of primogeniture.[19] The democratic polity of Islam had now become a matter of history.

Early Research in the Islamic Way of Life

Barely a generation after the death of the Prophet, people began to analyse the remarkable system of life

---

of the Khalifa and the doctrine of *bai'at*, under which the members of the community signified their choice and thus, in a way, acted as God's agents. The Qur'anic conception of the "Khilafat of man" seems to be at the bottom of the principle that the will of the community was a manifestation of the will of God; *cf.* Qur'an, ii, 30 For a further discussion of the Theory of Trust see Sherwani, *The Basis of Islamic Polity*, Islamic Review (Woking.) July 1951. This article has been translated into the Indonesian language and printed in the Journal *Masjumi*, Jogjakarta, December, 1952.

(19) Gierke, *op. cit.*, p. 34, says that the idea that monarchy was an office found emphatic utterance in the Middle Ages. This may well be compared to the conception of the Khilafat with its duties and rights. The Khilafat of the early days seems to be the direct predecessor of the elective monarchy of the early Middle Ages Marsiglio of Padua (1270–1328), Rector of the University of Paris, says that it was for the whole body of the ruled to constitute its head. People may exercise the right of election or may delegate their powers; Gierke, p. 42. This comes very near the methods adopted to elect three out of four Caliphs after the Prophet's death.

preached by him and to find out its permanent values in order that their conclusions might be applied to the changing conditions as far as possible. Thanks to the achievement of Uthmān, the third Khalifa, there was one universal edition of the Qur'ān which could admit of no change.[20] But then there was the question of the Prophet's conduct in peace and war, in administration, in the application of the law to various questions. It was soon evidenced that it was necessary to delve into the traditions about what the Prophet had said and how he had acted, for without this information the knowledge of Islam could not be regarded complete. This task was performed by the Muḥaddithīn or Traditionists who left no stone unturned to find out the most correct accounts of Muhammad's life. There were others who belonged to the Philosophical School. No doubt arguing from the premises which had Islam as their background their analysis appealed more to reason than to tradition, and their rationalism increased with the passage of time till at the hands of certain Western Muslim philosophers like Ibn Rushd (1126–1198) traditional Islam was practically ignored. The early protagonists of this school formed a kind of connecting link between the classical and early Christian writers on the one hand and

---

(20) It is remarkable that post-Islamic political speculation in the West did not really begin till after 1141 when the Qur'an was translated for the first time into Latin by Pierre de Cluny. See von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, p. 50. The first medieval political philosopher of any stature, St. Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274), got his training at the semi-Arabic University of Naples founded by the Arabo-phil King of Sicily, Frederick II, in 1224; Hitti; *op. cit.*, p. 612. He was one of the first Christian writers who "aimed at harmonising Reason and Revelation." As regards law, he says that "it must be in accordance with the fundamental principles of Universal Justice" and that "the Law of Nature emanates in the Divine Will." Aquinas says that the essence of all social organism lay in the principle of Unity. See Gierke, *op. cit.*, pp. 113, 32.

later medieval European thinkers on the other, and it is no exaggeration to say that had it not been for the workers of these Muslim analysts of the political ideas, medieval Christian thought might have taken a different shape.

THREE REPRESENTATIVE MUSLIM POLITICAL THINKERS

(a) *Ibn abi'r Rabi'*

Political speculation proper begins with Ibn abi'r Rabi' who wrote his remarkable compendium ***Suluku'l-Malik fi tadbir el-Mamalik*** during the reign of Mu'tasim, who ruled the Abbasid Empire from 833 to 842.[21] It may be averred without any fear of contradiction that there was no contemporary political thought worth the name in the West, while on the other hand, Ibn abi'r Rabi''s book is full of the most vivid political speculation. It is compiled in the form of columns and tables, a scheme which was followed later by the neo-Pythagorean Oikonomicos. The author begins by distinguishing the position of man from other living creatures. He says that among all living creatures of God man is the only one who is endowed with the faculty of the keen perception of the probable consequences of his actions. As he has the power of thinking and judicious discretion he can choose what seems to him the best. As a living being he likes to see the quick satisfaction of his desires while his thinking faculty makes him probe into the probable consequences of his actions.[22]

Ibn abi'r Rabi' rightly points out that man cannot fulfil his wants without the help of others. No industry, no handicraft, no home is self-sufficient. The carpenter wants things made by the blacksmith, the blacksmith needs the result of the efforts of the metallurgist, the metallurgist, of

(21) The whole question whether our author lived and wrote in Mu'tasim reign (833–842) or Musta'sim's reign (1226–1242) has been discussed in Sherwani, *op. cit.* pp. 43–47.

(22) *Suluk* 7.

many other handicraftsmen, and so on. Had every industry and every home been self-sufficient there would have been no need for mutual help and co-operation and no way to fix prices. It is really this action and reaction which fixes prices and wages and through which profit and loss can be determined.

Our author says that man wishes to acquire wealth for a number of reasons. He wants animals for his domestic use and raw material for his food and for his handicrafts. It is the same with states, and if they are powerful they try to capture cities and countries in order to increase their own wealth, make the lives of their own citizens comfortable and increase their military potential.[23]

Ibn abi'r Rabi' in a way forestalls Ibn Khaldun by his analysis of human habitations and their division into urban and rural groups. He says that just as plenty of water and low taxation are needed by the rural population, so a good locality, plenty of air, water and fuel, a sense of safety from a possible external as well as internal foe—all these are necessary for the upkeep of the urban section of the population.

Now a great difficulty is bound to arise if each person tries to have his own way, with the result that the strong would always have a tendency to tyrannize over the weak. It is thus the Will of God that a Head of the State (Ra'Is) should be appointed to see that the Divine commandments

(23) *Ibid.*, 24, 75. Compare this idea of man being *a thinking animal* with Aristotle's theory of man being a *political animal*; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1, 18. St. Augustine says that man is by nature *compelled* to form social Relations. He also traces the formation of states to the original sin which was the cause of the subjection of man to authority. See Gettel., *History of Political Thought*, p. 89.. Compare also Ghazzali's theory of the rise of man to the citizenship of a state described in his *Ihyau'l-'Ulum*, III, 6'5. For economic thought in general see *Suluk*, 71–75.

for the organization of the people and unity of action are properly enforced. In course of time larger political entities are evolved and a number of these headships are united to form one large headship leading to the formation of a state with one supreme head or *Ra'īs* to rule it. It is necessary that this supreme head should govern the land with a view to promoting the interests of the whole state, he should be free from such base qualities as greed, pride, vice, unscrupulousness, etc., and should always have an eye to justice.[24]

The book, a kind of *multum in parvo*, also analyses the courses of internal turmoil as well as the conditions of a return to peace. The author says that sedition is committed when a man turns his back on the principles which formed the basis of his loyalty to the ruler. He then goes on to analyse the causes of internal turmoil and the condition which would put an end to it.

Ibn abi'r Rabī' stands midway between purely Greek thought with its annihilation of the individual and the purely individualistic theory under which the state is regarded as the handmaid of the individual.[25] It is remarkable that there is not one word in the whole work which might be taken to mean the slightest religious or racial bigotry or the exclusion of any particular body of the

(24) The theme of the evolution of the state is taken up by Ghazzali (1058–1111). See Sherwani, *op cit.*, ch. 6, paragraph "Development of the State idea" at p. 157. This may be contrasted with St. Augustine's theory of the original sin of man as the cause of the origin of the state. See Gettel, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

(25) The whole essence of the social doctrine in Islam is the preservation of the family coupled with service to the state. For the former see *Qur'an*, iv, 7, 36; viii, 41; xxix, liv, 55; etc. A man cannot leave even one-third of his property to any of his heirs and the property must be divided among heirs according to the principles laid down in the *Qur'an*. Moreover the whole law of divorce is a case in point.

people from office.[26] Here is a book on socio-political theories compiled in the ninth century A. C. tacitly telling the ruler at whose bidding the book was compiled that the good of the state lies in promoting a sense of equality between the races and religions which are found in it and that its safety requires that only those be appointed to be in charge of different departments who are fit for them. He thus deprecates any kind of undue favouritism or nepotism for they would go counter to the well-being of the state. His work is a politico-ethical treatise without a tinge of religious prejudice and bigotry. He takes his stand on what is inherently good and ethically correct, making morality the great bedrock of a successful life and statehood.

(b) *Al Fārābi*

We have dealt with Ibn Abi'r-Rabi' at some length because his work in the field of political thought is not sufficiently known. The next thinker we would deal with, Abu Nasr Muhammad al-Farabi, was a giant in the field of political speculation. He was born in 870 and died at the advanced age of eighty in 950. He was a Turk by race, and quite recently his millenary was celebrated in Turkey by the issue of special postage stamps and the publication of special editions of learned journals.[27] Farabi's versatility knew no bounds, for he found time to write books on philosophy, logic, politics, mathematics and physics, and not only compiled works on music but actually composed

(26) In contrast to this St Augustine would not admit non-Christians to any important office in his Civitas Dei, in which supreme authority was to be held by the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

(27) Thus Ankara University brought out a special Farabi edition of its *Dil ve Tarih-Cografya Dergisi* (Vol. VIII, No. 4), and the author of the present article is proud that his article on Farabi which appeared in *Islamic Culture* in July 1938 was translated into Turkish by Professor Yurdaydin and the translation printed on pp. 442–458 of the issue as *Farabi' nin Siyasi Nazariyeleri*, Harun Sirvani'den Terceme).

musical pieces. In pure philosophy Farabi became as famous as any Muslim philosopher, and it is related that even the great physician philosopher, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), could not make out the true import of parts of Aristotle's Metaphysics without consulting Farabi's writings. Farabi has left five works which contain his political theories, of which two, the *Ara'u ahli'l-Madinati'l-Fadilah* and the *Siyasatu'l-Madaniyah*, are more important than the others.

Farabi says that from the very nature and surroundings of man it follows that human beings should gather in large groups, whatever the clime and colour of the inhabitants might be. He enumerates different kinds of human groupings such as the village, collections by the road-side, wards of a large town and finally the state which he calls the smallest *perfect* human groups. He then goes on to the *millat* or nationality by which he means the collection of a number of states, each with a consciousness of its own but without any definite political cohesion. The largest human grouping is, of course, mankind inhabiting the globe.[28]

Farabi goes on to discuss the causes of the differences between one human grouping and another. He says that these causes may be divided into natural and artificial. Forestalling Ibn Khaldun and Montesquieu, he says that natural differences arise owing to geographical factors and climatic conditions which react on the habits and customs of the people causing a bar to appear between one nation and another.[29] The artificial barriers consist mainly in differences in language making mutual communication difficult if not impossible between one human group and another. Thus in spite of the need for co-operation mankind is divided into numerous groups. According to Farabi the greatest good and the highest culmination of

(28) *Ara*, 77.

(29) *Ibid*., 38ff.

human effort is attained in the unit of perfect assemblages, i.e., the "City ' or as we should say, the State, and it is on this that he concentrates his attention [30]

There is one theory in which, again, Farabi forestalls European thinkers by many centuries and it is what may be termed the theory of mutual renunciation of rights. He says that as some men are overbearing, powerful, cruel or inordinately clever it is necessary that a way may be found under which justice may be possible for those who happen to be weak either physically or mentally When men first realised that society can ill be maintained with such glaring discrepancies in their conditions, "they gathered together and each of them gave up in favour of the other a part of potential right by which he could have overpowered the other, with the condition that they would all keep perfect peace and would not take away from the other anything except on certain definite conditions." If it comes to pass that peace is broken by any one element in the population of the country then all the other elements join hands, suppress the evil-doer and retain their liberty.[31]

---

(30) Farabi calls this مدينه following the Greek world *polis* which originally meant the ,City, but as in ancient Greece the " City coincided with the State, the two synonyms came to mean the generic State."

(31) This compact is mentioned in *Ara*, 113. A study of the social contract as depicted by Hobbes (1588–1679) in his book, the *Leviathan* would show how closely his description of the contract follows Farabi who wrote seven centuries earlier. Hobbes says (*Lev.*, Ch. 17) that at the time of the institution of the Commonwealth real unity was achieved by a covenant as if every man should say to every other man, 'I authorise and give up my right of governing myself to this man or this assembly of men on condition that thou give up thy right to him and authorise all actions in like manner. Farabi even anticipates Locke's two *Treatises on Civil Government* published in 1689. For he defines " natural justice " as justice without any political organization very much like the state of nature envisaged by Locke, *Treatise* 2. ch. 2.

As has already been pointed out, there is no question of there being any human sovereign in Islam, but the need for a Head of a State, Ra'is, is patent to all Muslim political thinkers. He starts his argument with the nature of the ruler's work and says that the most important task that he has to perform is the making of proper deductions and taking quick decisions. Now, says he, those who draw conclusions from given facts naturally lead those who cannot, and arguing from the same premises, there would be Ra'isul-awwal, the foremost leader, one who does not take orders from any one above him and who has the inherent qualities of observation; quick decisions and the capacity to convey his sense to others.[32] This Supreme Head should take lesson from the universal organization set up by God Almighty, the real sovereign, and put every one in a place best suited to him. Thus he should open out the highest and lowest posts in the government to the talent required for them, and equip each department with a subordinate ra'is with a capacity for observation and deduction measured according to the work allowed to him. He says that the best among the heads of State is one who makes the citizens of the Commonwealth acquire plenty and enjoy contentment, while he himself should want neither ease nor self-aggrandisement. He does not fully enunciate what his ***Madinatu'l'-Fadilah*** or the Model State exactly is, but it seems that when he is attending to it he means by it a state based on high Islamic principles. After this model state it is the "Welfare State" which Farabi considers to be the best.

Farabi gives enough scope to the individual and does not believe in communism as preached by Plato.[33] He divides

(32) *Siyasa*, 48 ff. Farabi's theory may be compared with the theory of Sovereignty as propounded by John Austin (1790–1859) who says that a determinate, human superior, not in the habit of obedience to a like superior, is sovereign in that society.

(33) *Ara*, 93. Farabi's thought comes midway between Individualism and Platonic Communism under which citizens would not be allowed to own houses, land or money at all, and even women would be common to them! See Plato's *Republic*, 471 (c)—422 (a).

property into individual property and common property, and while every man would have equal rights in the latter he would be given the fullest opportunity to enjoy his private property. He discards Platonic Communism as being against the very nature of man and believes that man is the natural hater of his own kind and whatever unity exists as between man and man is due to sheer necessity.[34]

There are many other political matters which Farabi discusses and they cover practically all that pertains to political thought, such as the formation of states, the integration of man in tribes, states and empires, the internal organization of states, the patriarchal theory, hereditary republicanism, colonial government and many other topics of a like nature. In many of his ideas he forestalls European political thinkers by centuries, and he is rightly called Al-Mu'allimu 'th-thani or the second Preceptor, the first one being Aristotle himself.

Ibn Khaldun

To call Ibn Khaldun merely a political theorist would do him great injustice, for there is little in the social services including Sociology, Economics, History, Political Science and Philosophy which he does not discuss in the great Muqaddamah or Prolegomenon to his vast work on the History of Arabs and Berbers. He belonged to a Hispano-Muslim family which had migrated from Seville to Tunis on the capture of that city by Ferdinand III of Castille in 1248. He was born in 1332 at Tunis, then the centre of African learning and culture, and he drank deep at the fountain of learning he found at his place of birth. He was a restless spirit and we see him in the service of the Sultan of Fez, then at Granada, at the Court of Pedro the Cruel of Castille, at Bejaya near Constantine in Al-Sina, at Cairo, at Mecca,

(34) *Ara*, 88.

taking part in the campaign against Timur and then back at Cairo where he died in 1406.[35]

Of Ibn Khaldun's work, Toynbee says that it can bear comparison with that of Thucyadides or that of Machiavelli for both breadth and profundity of vision as well as for sheer intellectual power, and "he has conceived a philosophy of history which is undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place."[36] Yet nearly four hundred years after his death he was unknown to Europeans, and it was only in 1806 that fragments of his work were brought to light by Silvestre de Sacy.[37] This ignorance of the Europeans regarding the works of a man whose family hailed from Spain may have been due to the suppression of Arabic writings by the order of Cardinal Ximenes in the Plaza de la Bab-er-Ramlah at Granada in 1499.[38] Already in 1812 Hammer-Purstgall called him an Arab Montesquieu,[39] and now there is hardly a language of culture in which an honourable mention of this great writer is not made.

Although there is hardly any branch of knowledge dealing with the human race which Ibn Khaldun has not touched, we shall confine ourselves to his views on Society and the State. He has forestalled Baron de Montesquieu by many centuries in his masterly analysis of the influence of

(35) There is a very informative brochure in English about Ibn Khaldun, printed at the Columbia University Press in 1938: Schimdt, *Ibn Khaldun, Historian, Sociologist and Philosopher*.

(36) Quoted in Charles Issawi—*An Arab Philosophy of History*, p. x.

(37) Schimdt, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

(38) For the burning of Arabic manuscripts by Cardinal Ximenes see Scot, *op. cit.*, ch. 26. Alvaro Gomez de Castro says in his *Historia, de Cardinal Ximenes*. Vol. 4, p. 102 that nearly five thousand manuscripts were burned in a single day. His words are quoted by Schimdt, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

(39) Quotation in Schimdt, p. 4.

climate on human character[40] and thus on political conditions of a certain geographical area. He says that while the northern and southern climes are either too cold or too hot for civilization to be reared, it is the central or the moderate zone, extending from the Straits of Gibralter right up to Turkistan, containing, among others, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Persians and Arabs, which has been the cradle of sciences, arts and crafts, architecture and all the other appendages of civilization. Even animals in this zone are characterised by self-restraint and moderation. He says that Prophets and the messengers of God are sent to these, the most perfect of men, to a large extent because they are more receptive to what they are taught. These people make extensive use of tools and metals and use in their daily transaction coins made of gold and silver. It is nations living in moderate climes that have contributed most to civilization and culture.[41]

It is this theory of the physical background of social life and human relations which Ibn Khaldun propounded nearly four centuries before it was reiterated by Bodin and further developed by Montesquieu.

Ibn Khaldun's views on the differences between the man of the desert and the town man, which are described in great detail, are well known and need not detain us here.[42] But there are certain important theories regarding the origin of society and the origin of the state which need recapitulation. As regards the origin of society, our author starts with the postulate that man is social by nature and he cannot do without society. "Each individual's capacity for

(40) Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755) published his famous works *L'Esprit des Lois* in 1748 I have used Nugent's English translation printed in 1773. The effect of climate on human society is found in Bk. 14, ff Bodin, the French philosopher lived, 1530–1596.

(41) *Muqaddamah*, Beirut Edition, 1888, pp. 75 ff.

(42) *Ibid.*, pp. 41 ff.

acquiring food falls short of what is necessary to sustain life......Even a day's supply of wheat requires several operations, grinding, kneading and baking each of which necessitates tools and utensils which presupposes the presence of carpenters, smiths, pot-makers and other craftsmen." Moreover such a commodity as wheat necessitates operations like sowing, reaping and threshing requiring more tools and crafts " In the same way "each individual needs the help of his fellowmen for the purpose of defence," for he cannot resist an animal, specially a beast of prey unaided. It is therefore necessary for man to unite his efforts with those of his fellow-men.[43]

The origin of the state naturally follows the origin of society, for "there arises the need of a restraining force to keep men off each other in view of their animal propensities for aggressiveness and oppression of others. This restraint must come from the man who wields power and authority... and prevents others from attacking any one else." This man would be the ruler or king of that society.[44] In a remarkable passage which follows, Ibn Khaldun avers that Divine law is not a *sine qua non* for the formation of such a society. He says that the number of people with revealed scriptures is far smaller than the number of those who do not believe in a Divine law or revealed scriptures, and yet these pagans have founded well-established, flourishing states in pre-Islamic as well as post-Islamic periods. It is

(43) See Issawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–100. This analysis may well be compared with Ghazzali's analysis of origin of Political Society detailed in *Ihyau'l-'Ulum*, iii, 6, vi. Ghazzali lived 1058–1111. Also see Sherwani, *op. cit.*, pp. 157 ff.

(44) *Issawi*, *op. cit.*, p. 100, wrongly identifies kingship with sovereignty. Neither Ibn Khaldun nor any early Islamic writer ever contested the Qur'anic doctrine, that sovereignty lay with God and God only. Here it may be mentioned that the latest trend of political scientists is towards the evolutionary theory of the origin of the state.

restraint rather than revelation which makes for the working of a successful state.[45]

The *Muqaddamah* is full of the most enlightening theories regarding the growth, working and the end of a state, but there is a very interesting theory regarding the origin of the state which may be regarded as one of Ibn Khaldun's chief contributions to the science of politics, and that is the theory of '*Asabiyat* or Group Mind.[46] He defines 'Asabiyat as the sense of one-ness and the collective aims and ideals of a group, leading to a resolve on the part of the individuals forming that group to work together.[47] In Ibn Khaldun's view this group mind may be traced back to the family and to tribal consanguinity. With the extension of tribal territory and the genesis of the state it was found that instead of being only a single aggregate of common feeling the group consisted of a number of such aggregates. These group minds were bound to come into conflict, and the state came into being on the final victory of one element over all others, so that its special power of internal co-operation got the better of all other powers and it thus became supreme in relation to all other powers within its orbit. As time passes the original idea of group mind gives place to a habitual obedience to a common ruler who is soon

---

(45) *Issawi*, op. cit. p. 101.

(46) For '*Asabiyat* or Group Mind see *Muqaddamah*, 122 pp. and 134 pp. Issawi wrongly translates this as social solidarity. It seems that he himself is not quite sure of the exactitude of this translation and confesses that Khemiri has translated the term as "nationalism in its broadest sense;" Khemiri, *der Asabiya in der Islam*. Berlin. 1936.

(47) This '*Asabiyat* has had some very curious manifestations in history in the modern cases of Belgium, Switzerland, Canada and the U.S.A. It has caused Heterogeneity to give place to near uniformity, while its lack has been the cause of the division of the sub-continent of India into India and Pakistan and made Burma, till not so very long ago a part of the Indian Empire, an Independent nation.

regarded as a spiritual as well as a secular overlord and who may be able to rule a people by sheer force when they lose their original group sense.[48]

As has been mentioned above there is hardly a branch of the social sciences with which Ibn Khaldun does not deal in the Muqaddamah. So far as society and the state are concerned he deals with the nature of kingship, changes in bureaucracy, natural age of a state, the results of the concentration of authority, territorial limits of the state and many other matters which are dealt in an exhaustive manner and which prove Ibn Khaldun to be the precursor of many a modern political thinker.

In this article an attempt has been made to trace the development of political thought from the time of the Prophet and thus give a glimpse of that thought as evolved by three great Muslim thinkers. Two of them, Ibn Abi'r Rabī' and Farabi lived and wrote in the period called the Dark ages in Europe when there was hardly a speck of political speculation in the West, while Ibn Khaldun, who wrote as late as the fourteenth century A.C. was a prince of thinkers among his contemporaries, and compares favourably even with some of those who came after him. In the footnotes a comparison is attempted between what they wrote and the political thought of Europe centuries after. Within the short compass of an article it is not possible to discuss more of Muslim political thought, but there is a chain of Muslims who enlightened the world by their ideas and who were the forerunners of the fathers of modern political speculation in the West.

(48) *Muqaddamah*, 115.

THE INFLUENCES OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD ON EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

—G. SCHMIDT*

> *"The Orient spread gloriously*
> *Over the Mediterranean Sea."—Goethe*

Introduction:—

EVEN in our time the attitude of the Occident towards the civilization of the Near East is determined by the European policy of the age of the Crusades. In fact, there are two theories which discuss this oriental civilization and its relation to the West: one of them recognizes the achievements of the Islamic peoples without any reservations, considering them, however, only as excellent single accomplishments; the other theory can hardly deny their importance, but takes the point of view that Islam borrowed the contents of its culture entirely from classic antiquity and the world of the Jewish-Christian doctrines, so that after all it did not offer anything new to the Occident.[1]

---

* Dr. G. Schmidt, Ph.D., Berlin; Assistant Professor at Fairleigh Dickinson College, Rutherford-Teaneck, N J.U.S.A.

(1) Apart from this essay is the discussion of the highly important influence of the Arabian Empires upon Europe, which Franz Taeschner, *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, Heidelberg.—Berlin-Magdeburg, 1944, has described in an excellent manner. He points to the fact (p. 93) that the frontier between West and East was on the banks of the River Euphrates in antiquity. But the Muslims moved it to the Mediterranean. In this way the old western countries became border countries and the centres of civilization took refuge in France, Germany and the districts of the Danube. Apart from this (p. 132) the Crusades enlarged the mental horizon of the Occident: "Whereas up to that time a Christo-centric conception of

This anti-Islamic attitude, strange to say, did not develop at a time when Islam was at the peak of its advance in Europe, (i.e., about the 8th or 9th century—battle of Poitiers[2]—), but only "in the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth century did the pattern of an excessively hostile opposition arise in the Occident against the Islamic world,"[3] that is at the time that Islam had established firm, apparently impregnable, positions and the time of total eviction had arrived, i.e., the age of the Crusades: the merchandise which had gone through the hands of the Arabs had been sold to the Europeans with a profit of 100% [4]

From this economic point of view, the Christian-Jewish-Islamic world of the Middle Ages was indeed one single cultural entity[5]—the esteem in which Islamic science and

the world and of history existed, which made identical the history of the world and the history of salvation, the Christian religion and human civilization, here for the first time a non-Christian world emerged on the intellectual horizon of the Western Christian, the cultural superiority of which he had to admit. In this way the simple concept of the world and of the history of the early medieval Occident was shattered, that picture which was constructed in accordance with the history of salvation. "The strength of the political hegemony becomes clear, if we remember that even a Pope—John VIII (872–882) —had to pay tribute to the Muslims. (Philip Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 5th ed., New York, 1951, p 604)

(2) When the Arabs were in Grenoble and on the pass of the Great St. Bernard. (Daniel Dennet, *Pirenne and Mohammed*. Speculum XXIII. Cambridge, Mass., 1948, p. 172).

(3) Joseph Hell, *Diearabische Dichtung im Rahmen der Weltliteratur* Erlangen, 1927, p. 12.

(4) Werner Sombart, *Der moderne Kapitalismus*, Munchen-Leipzig, 6th ed., 1st Vol., 2nd half Vol., 1924, p. 681.

(5) C. H. Becker, *Islamstudien*. Leipzig, 1924 (1st Vol.), p. 429: "The surprising thing remains that in spite of such a great difference in dogma (*scl*. the Christian and the Islamic) the philosophy of life of two religions can be so similar. And not only the philosophy of life. If we add that the material life also, particularly at the peak of the Middle Ages, was nearly identical in both civilizations we are fully entitled to speak of a unity of civilization of the oriental and the occidental world."

philosophy had been held suffered so much that their influence on Western civilization is widely underrated, with very few exceptions. The importance of some of the oriental contribution to occidental civilization may be admitted, but only very few authors will concede that the whole culture of the West depended to an amazingly large extent on that of the Orient apart from the generally well-recognized fact that our knowledge of antiquity is due to the translations of the Muslims.[6] Attractive though it might be to discuss the total effect that Islamic influences had on Western civilization, we have to realise that an examination of this problem would include phenomena which very often have no longer any bearing on the present time. The following parts of this essay, therefore, for the most part consider only those ideas which still have some meaning and value for our time. However, this discussion of the subject does not claim to be complete.

---

(6) Authors who do full justice to the Muslims are particularly August Muller and Carl Becker. Muller, *Der Islam im Morgen-und Abendland*, Berlin, I 1885; p. 512: "It has come into fashion recently to look with some contempt on Arabic science......The historian of mediaeval Orient should be satisfied if he points out that the Arabs and Persians were the instructors of all the Occidental world in these things for centuries. Observations and descriptions of new diseases,—in which keen insight and accuracy cannot be denied,—recapitulation, in some respects further development of the Aristotelian-Neo-Platonic doctrines into a system, beyond which the scholastics of the Occident had not gone too far. First of all, however, independent discovery and considerable progress in mathematics and physics, especially optics, among other fields of knowledge, furnish conspicuous examples of the scientific activity of those times. It is true the best work in these fields has been done by the Persians." Becker, *Islamstudein*, p. 305: "What we call the Middle Ages is in many respects—although not entirely—nothing else than an Orientalization of the Occident." *Ibid.*, p. 426: "The consequences of the crusades are the best proof of the enormous superiority of the Islamic world, which we recognize more from day to day."

It may be mentioned that the civilization of the mediaeval Orient is sometimes attributed to the Arabs because the majority of the writings of the scholars have been compiled in the Arabic language. The authors, however, belong to many different nations, and in order to avoid misunderstandings the Muslim influence will be discussed at this point. This designation does not restrict the discussion to the Islamic religion For Islam establishes the union of that multitude of people who write in the Arabic tongue, from the West of Africa right into the heart of India.

The Muslim teaches Europe.

"In 800 the Arabian Civilization like a sun passed from the world cities of the East over the countries of the West."[7]

The Religion.

Religion, of course, stands at the centre of Islamic philosophy. And the central problem is God: "The most perfect way to God is the insight that no way leads to Him......His essence is inconceivable to us." This is the formulation of the school of Al-Farabi.[8] God is the quiddity. But his real substance cannot be defined.[9] And these ideas which deny all anthropomorphous qualities to God, are repeated by the later Scholastics—the "esse a se, non ab alio"—and in the Renaissance: Nicolaus Cusanus (1401-1464).[10] Kant took one step further by extending his confession of ignorance to the thing itself.

---

(7) Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, II, Munchen, 1st to 15th ed., 1922, p. 102.

(8) Max Horten, *Die Philosophie des Islam*. Munchen, 1924, p. 84.

(9) Isfaraini (died 1027) according to Max Horten, *Die Philosophischen Systeme der spekulativen Theologen im Islam*. Bonn, 1912, p. 536.

(10) Raymund Klibansky *Nicolo da Cusa*. *Enciclopedia Italiana*, Roma, Vol. XXIV, 1934, p. 762; "Per pervenire alla conoscenza dell inconoscibilita di Dios'e una sapiente ignoranza."

Next to the unsolved and insoluble problem o' God, the problem of immortality receives the greatest attention: Ibn Bajjah distinguishes between that part of the soul which expresses itself in individual desires and actions and which continues to exist after death and receives punishment or award; and that part which is purely rational and which is the same for all. This spirit of the whole of mankind which is said to be eternal is allegedly united with the active spirit above it: this doctrine which is known as Averroism reaches the Christian Middle Ages.[11] The Fifth Lateran Council (1512) controverts this doctrine in its attempt to formulate more exactly the immortality of the individual.[12] The soul comes from the celestial world and again ascends to it according to Islamic and gnostic ideology.[13]

The theory of absolute predestination—"But ye shall not will, unless God willeth."[14]—which necessarily led to fatalism,[15] is next repeated by Gregor of Rimini (died 1358), and then later, especially by Calvin. According to him some souls are destined for salvation, others for damnation. More than that: it is the nucleus of the Wolff-Leibnitz philosophy and then became the foundation of the Physiocratic school, the liberalism of Adam Smith and, in this way, of our modern theory of free trade.

If we proceed from the religious philosophy life to the realm of the practical religious conduct of life, we have to realize that in the everyday conduct of life interpretations of principles are subject to much stronger changes than speculative ideas, because these are actually restricted to a small

(11) T.J. de. Boer, *Geschichte der Philosophie im Islam*. Stuttgart, 1901, p. 139.

(12) Eberhard Gothein, *Ignatius von Loyola und die Gegenreformation*. Halle, 1895, p. 89.

(13) Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*, p. 108.

(14) Qur'an Sura 76, 30.

(15) Muller, *op. cit.*, I, p. 186.

group of theoretically minded men, whereas the problems of conduct of life concern everyone personally and immediately.

Although there are in Islam, as probably in every religion, tendencies toward spiritual withdrawal from the world we cannot lose sight of the fact that Muhammad was not poor...,quite the contrary: he lived like a prince[16]—and that he did not lay himself under any restriction concerning the number of his wives. Muhammad's dictum: "No monasticism in Islam. The monasticism of Islam is the religious war,"[17] is the basis of all anti-asceticism. Max Weber says: "Islam was at the beginning a religion of world-conquering warriors, of a knightly order of disciplined fighting co-religionists, nevertheless not having the sexual asceticism of the Christian orders of knighthood."[18] In this way the Prophet reaffirmed the attitude of Judaism and made for himself later disciples in Protestantism, which denies every form of monastic life and asceticism and abolishes celibacy.

In the relationship between man and God stand the saint and the priest as mediators in Roman Catholicism. The saint is the intercessor. Judaism recognizes a direct relationship between man and God. The Byzantine Emperor Leo III the Isaurian also tried to weaken the position of the saints as mediators, using all his influence to achieve direct intercourse (between man and God), that is, personal prayer which the faithful directed to God. "This was an advance towards the idea of the absolute unity of the deity, on which Islam was based, which was brought into prominence by

(16) C.H. Becker. *Christentum und Islam*. Tubingen, 1907, p. 29/30.

(17) Ignaz Goldziher, *Die Religion des Islam in Die orientalischen Religionen*, Berlin Leipzig, 1906, p. 113.

(18) *Gesammelte Aufsatze zur Religionswissenschaftm*. I, Tubingen, 1920, p. 239.

Leo.[19]" An idea which Latin Catholicism disapproved, but which, however modern Protestantism adopted in full.

Leo III has been particularly known in ecclesiastical history as the image-breaker (edicts of 726 and 730). Although it has been said that certain Jewish polemics, and not the Islamic suppression of pictures, were the basic of his iconoclastic attitude,[20] it is extremely doubtful whether Jewish ideas had such a strong influence on the policy of the church. Much more probable is the presumption that this measure was a concession to the then world-ruling Islam.[21] In their opposition to the Church, the Arabs made their most substantial objection to the use of images, reproaching the Church with polytheism and idolatry.[22] The most fanatic image-breakers are the reformers Zwingli and Calvin.[23]

In Islam the problem of coming into closer contact with the perception of God was not to be solved by a thoughtful absorption into an impenetrable secret, but by a psychical discipline so that the faithful could advance to always higher perception step by step. This method has been compared to the *Exercitia Spiritualia* of Ignatius of Loyola whose method has, indeed, an amazing resemblance to that of the Arabian Prophet.[24]

Interesting are the parallels in ecclesiastical administration and policy. The "combination of spiritual and secular power in one hand," which we have already met in

(19) Leopold von Ranke, *Weltgeschichte.*, 5th part, Ist sub-part, Leipzig. 1884, p. 306.

(20) Becker, *Islamstudien*, p. 447.

(21) Ranke, *op. cit.*, p 245.

(22) *Ibid.*, p. 307.

(23) Der grosse Herder, 2nd vol., 4th ed., Freiburg (B), 1932, p. 721.

(24) Becker, *Islamstudien*, p. 421: "He who is familiar with the immense after-effect of the Arabic spirit in the Christian Spain of the 14th and 15th century will not find this supposition surprising."

the Israelitic high priesthood and which still exists to-day in the Protestant sovereign principalities such as England, was called into existence anew by Muhammad.[25] In the Reformation era this idea was even further improved by the principle: *cuius regio, eius religio.* Whereas Islam had originally granted freedom of religion in Islamic states, under 'Umar II a general Islamisation order was issued: whoever did not want to become a Muslim should emigrate.[26] First of all the caliph is a political administrator. There is no clergy. The religious offices are bestowed by a secular official (just as the Archbishop of Canterbury is appointed by the sovereign).[27] In every Muslim country the supreme administrative official makes decisions, either the Great Mufti or the Sheikh of Islam. From this personal union, of course, a soldier's religion develops very soon: "The warrior, not the man of letters, is the ideal of religion."[28] Who does not here recall the famous answer of Pope Julius II who, asked by Michelangelo whether the bronze statue of His Holiness (which was to be erected in Bologna) should hold a book in its hand, furiously exclaimed: "Give me a sword in it, I am not a scholar!"[29]

This fulness of power which is unfavourable to any idea of the division of power,—its origin is, of course, the Iranian theory of the divine right of kings,[30] which survived to our own times[31]—leads, of course, to limitless power which on the one hand is expressed in the infernal institu-

(25) Ranke, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

(26) Becker, *Islamstudien*, p. 255.

(27) Carlo Alfonso Nallino, *Islamismo*; *Encicloраedia Italiana*, vol. XIX, Roma, 1933, p. 358.

(28) Max Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialokonomik* III. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Tubingen, 1922, p. 358.

(29) Hermann Grimm, *Leben Michelangelo's* I. Hannover, 1860, p. 298.

(30) Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Islamischen Volker und Staaten*, Munchen-Berlin, 1939, p. 131.

(31) See the preamble of the acts of Imperial Germany: "We, Wilhelm, by divine right German Emperor, King of Prussia..."

tion of the Inquisition, on the other hand in absolute authority and dogma.

The inquisition was introduced by the Abbasides: ..."about the same time Mahdi had already entrusted a special official ('Arif) with the inquisition against the heretics, who reportedly acted as inquisitor for three years (8th century). Under his successors the inquisition was directed also against otherwise harmless doctrines, which however, for one reason or another were not acceptable to the Government within the Islamic range of Ideas.[32]". "Toleration is virtually out of the question within the consequential Shi'ism. Their religious principles always and easily furnished legal titles for exclusion, charges of heresy and acts of crude treatment of dissenters."[33] Is it any wonder that after the Muslims had been expelled, the inquisition in Christian Spain flourished as it had never done before? It was nothing else than a continuation of a century-old justice in the Muslim principalities under a different name!

However, it lasted until the dogma of infallibility was acknowledged in the Roman Catholic Church. According to the Shi'ites, the Imam (almost since the 9th century) is infallible.[34] He is the highest authority of the faith, manifestation of God Himself."[35] 'If he speaks, it is God Himself who comes forward as the speaker."[36] "Only the Vatican Council, which sat in conference in the years 1869/70, when the political power of the Romau See was already at the end of its days, resolved to accept this view against a strong opposition of a great number of the bishops."

Deep theological speculations are not suited for the masses. In an essay of Averroes about ' Speculative dog-

(32) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
(33) Goldziher, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
(34) De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
(35) Horten, *Philosophie. Islam*, p. 41.
(36) *Ibid.* p. 117.

matics"[37] he quotes 'Ali, the son-in-law of Muhammad: "Speak to men of what they understand: do you wish God and His ambassador to be accused of a lie?" Who obeyed this advice better than the person who invented the *biblia pauperum*, the classic example of the *argumentum ad hominem* in Logic?

II. The Sciences

The Orient is the uncontested teacher of the Occident in philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and medicine.

For centuries the Occident has been hardly anything more than the docile pupil of the Orient,[38] although it is itself not a little proud of its alleged creativeness. "All problems which appeared suddenly from the 12th to the 16th century in Europe and stirred the people, have already been studied and answered between the 10th and 12th century in the Orient."[39] The most important points of contact, where the two worlds met, were Toledo, (where after the expulsion of the Arabs from Spain an enormous quantity of Arabic writing fell into the hands of the Christians),[40] and Palermo, where Frederick II of Hohenstaufen produced probably the greatest experiment in the amalgamation of the civilizations of the East and West.[41] And the most significant centres of Western learning, which was based on oriental science,

(37) Transl. by Marcus Joseph Muller, *Philosophie und Theologie*, Munchen, 1875, p. 26.

(38) Fr. Dieterici, *Die Philosophie der Araber im X. Jahrundert nach Chr.*, 4th part, Leipzig, 1868, p. VIII.

(39) *Ibid.*, 2nd part, 1879, p. VI.

(40) Clemens Baumker, *Studien und Charakteristiken zur Geschichte der Philosophie, insbesondere des Mittelaters, Munster* (W.), 1972, p 328.

(41) Ernst Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich* II, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1928, p. 312; already under the predecessor of Frederick Roger I (died 1101) the Moslems occupied the highest positions. (Hitti, *History*, p. 607).

were the universities of Paris and Padua,[42] whereas Kufa and Basra in Iraq were the outstanding centres of Arabic Islamic sciences.[43]

With a voracious appetite the Occident devoured the wisdom of the Orient. Nearly every country had its translator: Gerhard of Cremona (1114-1187), Johannes Hispanus, Dominicus Gundasilinus of Segovia (first half of the 12th century), Michael Scotus and Hermann the German[44] are the most outstanding transmitters of civilization. But also "the Jews played a principal part in this transmission of Arabic science to the Occident, as translators, because they were better versed in Arabic (which is related to their idiom) than the Christian scholars; and as teachers of the Greek-Arabic philosophy. A number of learned Jews taught at the high schools of Spain, Southern France and Italy from the 12th to the 14th century." "Only the more significant Spanish Jews may be mentioned here as Solomon ben Gabriel (garbled Gebirol, latinised Avicebron), Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides). Abraham ben David, Levi ben Gerson, the latter one particularly known as translator of Arabic works into Hebrew, as a commentator of Averroes and as an author of several original philosophical works.[45] It is sometimes asserted that the source of the ideas and practices which Europe borrowed from the Muslim was merely the hellenistic sciences and other ancient works in

(42) De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 185: "The Emperor (Frederick II) and his son Manfred sent translations of philosophical writings to the universities of Bologna and Paris." (Windeldelband, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, 11th ed., Tubingen, 1924, p. 297).

(43) Muller, I, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

(44) De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

(45) H. Suter, *Die Araber als Vermittler der Wissenschaften in deren Ubergang vom Orient in den Occident* Aarau, 1897, p. 19.

Arabic[46] garb though in a slightly developed form. But we are tempted to ask how Europe can seek credit for these sciences after having given them up for so long and thus, in a way abandoned all such claims.

(1) *The Arts*

PHILOSOPHY

"In the history of philosophy the Arabs were the masters in the period from the 9th to the 13th century."[47]

The great European Scholastics Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus[48] and Anselm of Canterbury have their models in the Islamic philosophers of the East: Al-Ghazzali, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Al-Farabi.[49]

The central problem of European Scholasticism which desired to be a combination of philosophy and religion was, as is known, the controversy about the universals, i.e. the question whether reality has to be attributed to the general notions (terms), the universalia or whether they are only intellectual constructions, expedients, whether they are real or intellectual: ***universalia sunt realia*** or ***universalia sunt nomina***: this was the controversial point: the reason for the importance of this problem was the application of the terms to God.[50]

Avicenna who wanted a philosophy that did not go beyond the framework of religion—a concept which was expressed in the Occident by the words: "***Philosophia est ancilla theologiae.***"—expresses his thoughts about the universals as follows: "Before every multitude existed each thing has its being in the spirit of God and the angels (spirits of

(46) C.H. Becker, *Das Erbe der Antike im Orient und Okzident*, Leipzig, (1931, p. 21; note his contradiction to footnote (6)!

(47) Dieteric, *op. cit.*, Ist part, 1976 p. 152.

(48) Albert had studied in Padua, the centre of the Latin Averroism.

(49) Dieterici, *op, cit.*, 15th part, Leiden, 1892. *Alfarabi's Philoso. Abhandlungen* p. XXI.

(50) Dieterici *op. cit.*, 15th part, p. XII.

the sphere), then it enters the multitude as a material form, in order to rise finally to the universal in the human intellect."[51] This is a classical formulation of Neo-Platonic realism as it is also expressed by Farabı (died 950), before him by Johannes Scotus Eriugena (810–877) and after him by Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), whereas Averroes (=Ibn Rushd) (1126–1198) returned to the purely Aristotelian school.[52] In the West a pure Nominalism is represented by William of Occam (1290–1349).[53]

There did not seem to be a better justification for the doctrines of religion than to say that reality was to be attributed to every term. Neo-Platonism, which was in constant conflict with absolute Aristotelianism, can only be understood from the religious point of view. After all, this theory from the very beginning rendered superfluous every evident proof of the existence of God, if only this term existed ; the theory was the classical basis of the ontological proof of God.

But it was obvious that from the strictly philosophical point of view the matter could not rest at this point, particularly as Aristotle himself had overthrown this Platonic ideology and his speculations were built upon a strictly empirical basis. The antagonist of the ideas of Avicenna is Averroes, the great commentator of Aristotle in the Islamic world who wrote in favour of a radical explanation, i. e. a rationalistic treatment of the facts of religion.[54] In this way he became the forerunner of the weighty ideas of the 18th century which originated in France and have become the foundations of our modern life: philosophical thinking tries to free itself from religion.

(51) De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

(52) Dieterici, *op. cit.*, 5th part, 1876, p. XII,

(53) *Ibid.*, 8th part, 1872, p. XI: 'The controversy between the Nominalists and the Realists which stirred the Middle Ages raged already centuries ago between the Orthodox and the Mu'tazilites."

(54) Gothein, *op, cit.*, p. 84.

Of course, the Aristotelian-Averroistic course did not enjoy the favour of the religious authorities of the Occident; but "although Averroism has always been opposed all over the Occident," it always became more and more powerful. It participated in the scepsis of nominalism: it dominated in its pure form the Italian universities at the same time that humanism ignored or fought all the Scholastics through its most resolute representative.[55] In Dante's lifetime one of the most outstanding representatives at the University of Paris was Siger of Brabant,

> "Who, when he lectured in the Street of Straw
> Could syllogize unpalatable truths!"[56]

Other representatives are Nicoletto Vernias (died 1499), Alexander Achellini of Bologna (died 1518), Agostino Nifo (1473-1546) and Zimara di Naples (died 1532).[57] Even Augustinus Nifus, the intimate friend of Leo X, was an Averroist, although he was not allowed to profess it publicly."[58]

Apart from this, there are many philosophical ideas which appeared in the Orient some time before we meet them in the Occident. We encounter, for instance, pantheistic ideas, although we in the West developed the habit of considering Spinoza and his follower Goethe as their characteristic representatives: "Sometimes we are surprised that Islâm tolerated a strongly pantheistic tendency and that the dicta —God is not far away from every Muslim...He works and sways in everyone...The Islamic feeling to live in God, at any time passing over to the mystic concept of being one with God, to dissolve himself in God, to clothe himself in divine qualities and to enter into God...—were accepted by

(55) *Ibid.*, p. 47.

(56) Dante: *Paradise*, X, 136.

(57) Windelband, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

(58) Suter. *op. cit.*, p. 26.

some as not repugnant to Islam."[59] Averroes represents a theory of Pampsychismus, according to which the individual is only a sharer of the eternal reason of the species. The Christian philosophers, of course, controverted this theory.[60]

In Ibn Khaldun (died 1406) we meet probably for the first time a man who designs a philosophy of history.[61] And if Albertus Magnus studies psychology his models are Al-Farabi and Avicenna.[62] In the field of dialectics, Islamic leadership is uncontested,[63] and it seems very modern to us that Roger Bacon—influenced by Arab civilization—remarks that morality is the principal component of universal religion.[64]

A greater sensation, however, was caused by the axiom of the double truth, adopted by the Scholastics, than by any other doctrine. This was the contention that something might be true in philosophy that may be untrue in religion and vice versa. Such a theory, which apparently denies the principle of contradiction, was frequently attributed to Averroes who, as generally admitted today, never expressed such nonsense.[65] This view served as a wonderful excuse when religious doctrines were carried *ad absurdum* by logical arguments.[66]

---

(59) Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*. p. 209.

(60) Windelband, *op. cit*. p. 285; see above p. 6.

(61) Brockelmann, *op. cit*., p. 198.

(62) Baumker, *op. cit*., p. 108.

(63) Becker, *Christentum und Islam*, p. 45.

(64) Windelband, *op. cit*., p. 268.

(65) Horten, *Philosophie des Islam*, p. 16, 55; Baumker, *op. cit*., p. 8.

(66) The political sciences are not considered as a branch of knowledge in themselves until the middle of the 18th century. Ideas about Government were often considered as a subdivision of philosophy. Al-Farabi wrote with reference to Plato and Aristotle two works "Model of a Government" and "Conduct of a Government." Some ideas from these works crept into Francis Bacon's *Philosophia Civitatis* (F. Dieterici, *Die Staatsleitung von Al-Farabi*, Leiden, 1904, p. XXIII).

MATHEMATICS

If Averroes has been reproached with the worst crime that can be attributed to a philosopher, the Arabs were undeservedly accredited with the invention of the system of the value of numbers according to their position, which is originally a creation of the Indians. Perhaps the Jews derived it from them and brought it to Europe.[67] It would not have been an impossibility to compute in big numbers without the use of this system, but many difficulties would have ensued. But how gifted they were in mathematics becomes evident when we learn that about the year 820 A.D. the mathematician Al-Khwarizmi composed a first book of algebra with examples, which—translated into Latin—still served in the 16th century as a textbook to Occidental scholars, who derived their algebraic knowledge from it[68] "They enlarged algebra by the solution of the equation of the 3rd and 4th degree with the help of geometry (conics)."[69] "In the field of the trigonometry the knowledge of sine and cosine, perhaps also of the tangent, is a heritage from the Arabs; the splendid period of Peurbach, Regiomontanus, Copernicus would not be conceivable without the works of the Arab mathematicians who laid a foundation and prepared for it.[70]

(2) *The Natural Sciences*

ASTRONOMY

From this it was only one step to push forward into the field of astronomy. The most important Arab astronomers

---

(67) Max Weber, *Wirtschaftgeschichte*. 2nd ed., Munchen-Leipzig, 1924, p. 191.

(68) Joseph Hell, *Die Kultur der Araber*. Leipzig, 1909, p. 100.

(69) Suter, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

(70) Joseph Hell, *Der Islam und die abendlandische Kultur*, p. 100. The x (ش) of the mathematicians is an abbreviation of the Arabic "xei" شی = cosa. (Paul de Legarde, *Mitteilungen*, I. Goettingen, 1884, p. 137).

are Ibn al-Zarquala (Ibrahim ibn Yahya al-Naqqash, Abu Ishaq of Cordoba about 1050), who composed a table, and Jabir ibn Aflah (Jeber=Geber) of Seville (about 1145). In the 13th century Alfonso X (about 1250) gave the order to various scholars in Toledo to make new tables, particularly for astronomical purposes. These were completed about 1254 and are considered extremely valuable.[71] Abu Ma'shar (died 886) taught the laws of ebb and tide to Europe on the basis of the rising and setting of the moon. (He was born in Balkh in Khurasan and lived in Baghdad).[72] If the discoveries of Kepler are based on the work of the English Franciscan monk Roger Bacon (died 1294), the latter in his time depended on the studies of Ibn Haitham, who is known under the name of Alhazen.[73] Of special value, however, were advances in nautical astronomy.[74] Do not the words Zenith, Azimuth and Nadir used in western languages remind us of their works in this field.[75]

Medicine

' Nature and Mind—don't talk to Christians thus!
Men burn up atheists, fittingly,
Because such speeches are most dangerous
Nature is sin......''[76]

(71) David Smith, History of Mathematics, New York, 1925, vol. II, p. 609; Spengler, op. cit., p. 389. They were made under the guidance of the rabbi Isaak Hassan, by Jewish and Islamic as well as Christian savants. Also the invention of the sextant is to be credited to the Muslims. (Franz Strunz, Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften im Mittelalter, Stuttgart, 1910, p. 56).

(72) Hitti, History, p. 378.

(73) Hell, Der Islam und die abedle. Kultur, p. 102.

(74) Weber, Wirtschaftsgeschichte, p. 179.

(75) The greatest geographer of the Middle Ages is Al Idrisi (died 1166) who lived at Palemo (Hitti, History, p. 609); and the pilot of Vasco de Gama on the voyage from Africa to India was the Egyptian, Ahmad ibn-Majid. (Hitti, History, p. 689.)

(76) Goethe, *Faust*, II, I. The emperor's palace. The throne room, 4897/4900.

The religion of the Occident forbade the penetration of the secrets of nature and consequently the secrets of the human body, and thus created a monopoly in favour of all those people who were not members of the church, both Jews and Muslims. And again the great polyhistor Avicenna is the great physician of the Orient and Occident: his book "*El-Qanun fi't-tibb.*" (Code of Medicine),[77] was circulated in numerous Latin translations in the Middle Ages.[78] It remained the classic textbook of medicine in Europe[79] until the 16th century.[80] But the most important discovery which we owe in the field of medicine to the Muslims is perhaps discovery of Ibn al-Haitham, who came to a correct understanding of sight and who declared—against all outdated views, which had been transmitted from antiquity and were still respected in his days—that the point of perception was the backwall of the eye.[81] Terms which we still use to-day such as vitreous humour, horny skin or retina can be traced back to him.[82] The starting of hospitals for chronically sick people we owe to Al-Walid (ruled from 705 to 715)[83] and likewise the institution of pharmacies goes back to the Arabs.[84] "The influence of Arabian medicine in the Occident began with Constantinus Africanus's translation at Salerno in the beginning of the 12th century, reached its peak in the 13th and 14th centuries at the universities of Montpellier, Padua, Bologna and Paris.''[85] Likewise in chemistry and physics they introduced the experiment which replaced the speculation of the Greeks.[86]

(77) Muller, *op. cit.*, II, 1887, p. 67.
(78) *Ibid.* II, p. 68.
(79) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
(80) De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
(81) Hell, *Der Islam und die abendl. Kultur*, p. 102.
(82) Strunz, *op. cit.*, p. 57/8.
(83) Hitti, *History*, p. 221.
(84) *Ibid.*, p. 364.
(85) Suter, p. 30.
(86) Hitti, *History*, p. 380.

(3) *The Active Life*

ECONOMICS

The fundamental antagonism between the western and eastern philosophy of life is centred in economic ethics. Christianity had taken the position that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God, but according to Islam many rich people were admitted to Paradise. Riches often enough gained as war loot, were, therefore, frequently an award for good acts in a Holy War.[87] The west emblazoned the ascetic spirit while the Arabs, a commercial one on their flag. Could there be a synthesis possible in the antagonism of these two philosophies so unlike in their principles?

In the structure of western economic life there was only one place where the counsel of poverty was strictly observed: the members of the clerical orders were personally without means, but the order as such could certainly be wealthy.[88] Here Plato's ideas about government were followed, according to which the philosophers who ruled the state should be as poor as individuals. However, apart from this, in the guild system, which was developed later on, great importance was attached to a certain affluence and the princes particularly appreciated "Oriental luxury." Perhaps they even considered these luxuries as a necessary attribute of their dignity! Apparently hardly any difference could be seen between the western and eastern way of living.

The nucleus of the mediaeval laws of economics, however, was canon law which forbade the taking of interest, a prohibition based on Luke 6–34. What was the actual situation?

(87) Weber, *Grundriss der Sozialokonomik*, p. 357.

(88) Let us only think of the monastery of St Germain des Pres near Paris, which ruled over 8643 persons!

It has to be granted that the Council of Nicaea (325) had already forbidden clergymen to charge interest on loans ; that the fathers of the Church Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome and Ambrose had objected to the taking of interest by laymen ; but the determined attack of the canonic legislation started only with Alexander III (1179),[89] i.e. a long time after the expansion of Islam. We cannot understand why centuries had to pass before this law was seriously enforced.

Judaism observed a law which forbade the taking of interest from a "fellow-man," and Islam also had the same law.[90] If we realize that in the famous quoted passage of the gospel of Luke, really no prohibition of interest was included, and if we realize that the words *danizete meden apelpizontes* only meant that a person who was lending something should not do so in order to receive later a favour from the borrower, then obviously the absolute observance of this law was enforced only because people could no longer avoid escaping the moral code of Islam who had conquered the world.

The people had probably for a long time refused to observe this law, because they realized that loans would have been otherwise impossible. But did not the Muslims themselves find ways to evade it? Usury was forbidden by Islam just as by other religions, but any reproach was easily evaded by the discounting of promissory note or by the commenda, i.e. by the investment of capital with a merchant whose profits were shared, provided the business was lucrative.[91]

Particularly interesting is the institution of the "Dead Hand" as well as the enfeoffment in trust. In the Islamic

(89) W. Endemann, *Die nationalokonomischen Grundsatze der canonistischen Lehre*, Jena 1863, p. 8/9.

(90) Becker, Islamstudien, p. 183.

(91) *Ibid.*, p. 413; Weber, Wirtschaftsgesch., p. 183.

world the institution of the "*Waqf* exists, a foundation in favour of a mosque or some other devout purpose," which was actually established only in order to secure a rent for the family of the donor. This rent was tax-free.[92] It is known that this institution had come to stay in Europe in such a way that Charlemagne forbade the church to acquire real estate. As a consequence, no people living on ecclesiastical property could be called into the militia. Only in the last century, particularly under the influence of the ideas of the French Revolution, was a very extensive "secularization" of ecclesiastical property made, because the government had lost tax revenues in vast measure.

The institution of the enfeoffment in trust, much in vogue in England and Germany, was introduced by the Arabs in Spain. It meant that real estate owned by one family was always inherited by the eldest son. In this way the position of certain families was strengthened for centuries, and so they got the ascendancy over the masses of the *misera plebs*. The enfeoffment in trust became actually the financial basis of the European aristocracies. Only the French Revolution, which on the one hand sanctioned private property and on the other was a strong defender of the idea of equity, used its influence in favour of the equality of rights of the heirs of a testator In Germany the enfeoffment in trust was abolished only by the revolution of 1918. The ideas of the Arabs had a long life in Europe !

Of special importance also in the Middle Ages was the system of the "fondachi,[93]" governmental storehouses, which Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen introduced

(92) Weber, Wirtschaftsgeschichte, p. 107.

(93) Gerhard Schmidt, Influenze italance sulla formazione dell' Impero Britannico Rivista di Politica Economia, Rooma, 1938, vol. VII/VIII, p. 740, and id., Los Extranjeros, I. Revista Mexicana de Sociologia, Mexico, vol. VIII, 1946, p. 326

into his empire.[94] The financial system of the great Adriatic republic of Venice was based more or less on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. It has been shown that Fondaco ideas were one of the most essential foundations of the position of England in international trade.[93]

The fact that the Muslims imported a number of products to Europe is too well known to require a full description here. We may only mention that they imported rice, corn, sugar-cane. the date-palm, the peach and the pomegranate into Spain[95] Also damask,—fine linen, the name of which derives from Damascus—, and a brocade from "Baldach," as the people called it in the West instead of "Baghdad," which gave its name to canopy (in German = Baldachin).[96] The designation of the custom authority as 'doana (Ital. dogana, French : douane) derives from the Arabic (diwan).[96] Of course, price regulations were known : the governments bought up basic foods and resold them to the retailers at fixed prices.[97] A long time before Europe introduced paper-money, the Muslims tried to put it into circulation,[98] although without any practical success.

Needless to say, the masses of the Muslims were not led by religious motives primarily, although sometimes it may appear so for instance, when they were engaged in a Holy War. For religion is something that is not basically an experience of the masses but of the individual. They are above, all commercially, or, what is the same thing from the standpoint of the government, fiscally minded.[99] And for this reason it is clear that when they subjugated foreign nations they were less interested in the propagation of their faith than

(94) Kantorowicz, op. cit., p. 260.
(95) Hell, Der Islam und die abendl. Kultur, p. 110.
(96) Muller, op. cit., I, p 473.
(97) Brockelmann, op. cit., p. 218.
(98) Muller, op. cit., II, p. 253.
(99) Becker, *Islamstudien*, I, p. 257.

in filling the tax collector's treasury by the levying of special taxes which they collected from the defeated non-Muslims.[100] The non-Muslim had to pay a poll-tax and a real estate tax.[101] Now we can understand why since the time of the crusades, special dues were levied again and again on the Jews; they were treated in the West exactly as the Christians were treated in the East. Here as well as there the practice of religion was permitted provided the taxes were paid punctually, and this was supposed to be the best proof for the fact that they were not too serious about the propagation of religion. Quite the contrary ; what greater crisis could happen to a treasury than a situation where great numbers became converts to the religion of the ruling majority under the influence of this pressure of taxation? How could the fiscal loss be made up ? Did not Muslim or Christian lose his special privilege ? The Islamic state presumed that a large number of non-Muslim subiects were necessary for its economic existence.[101] just as the modern European colonial system requires a great number of the native population who are not on the same level as the European settlers. And as 'Umar had expelled Jews and Christians from Arabia in 641 A.D. likewise the Christians at a later time would often expel the Jews from their countries.[102]

Government

So far we have seen that the government was organizd on any but a democratic basis. They did not even think of a republican constitution ; for what theocratic government would ever have professed this idea ! Let us remember that in the Athenian republic Aristophanes could produce satires about religion for the stage. The Buddhist

(100) Weber, *Grundriss d. Sozialokonomik*, p. 357.

(101) Becker, *Islamstudien*, 1, p. 331.

(102) Muller, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

doctrine of the incarnation of the kings and founders of religion[103] covers the world! For this reason the minister or vizier stands beside the prince,[104] as in the West the chancellor, who has to run the affairs of state, and only where there is no official state religion, as in the United States of America, does there exist a personal union of President and first minister. But the Prophet was intelligent enough not to allow his envoys to displace the little rulers, but wanted them to reign beside them and with them. This system was gladly taken over by the modern colonial powers, (e. g. France).[105] "What we call 'enlightened absolutism' is in the Orient called 'reasonable despotism'."[106] Actually the administrative system must have been so efficient that the Normans took it over under Count Roger de Hautevile in Sicily in 1063.[107] And the Normans were the recognized masters of administration in the Middle Ages! The principal institution adopted was the supreme criminal court in administrative cases.[108] Burkhardt, who was said to have been able to read the Renaissance like an open book, calls the method of government of the Italian princes of that period "half Islamic "[109]

SOCIETY

The special position which Christians and Jews had in the Islamic state was, of course, also expressed in their social position: the classic example is 'Umar's regulation of the year 641 regarding dress, which laid down that non-Muslims should distinguish themselves from the Muslims in

(103) *Ibid.*, I, 494.
(104) *Ibid.*, I, p. 475.
(105) Brockelmann, p. 44.
(106) Muller, *op. cit.*, I, p. 464.
(107) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
(108) Hell, *Die Kultur der Araber*, p. 85.
(109) Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, Leipzing, 1926, p. 430.

their dress.[110] Let us compare this with the highly classified system of groups of the European Middle Ages which acknowledged a well-developed hierarchy in secular as well as ecclesiastical society. Outwardly it was expressed by the fact that every craftsman could cross the streets only if he carried the insignia of his trade in his hand. Or let us think about the yellow spot of the ghetto which became a stigma. Just as the private residences of the non-Muslims were not allowed to tower above the house of the faithful, the synagogues in mediaeval England were not allowed to be higher than the churches. And if the position of woman was subordinated in the Orient and perhaps still is somewhat, as in Italy, let us remember that only recently, despite all the worship of woman, has the Eurpean woman entered upon the path which should lead to complete equality of rights with the male.

The veil, which had been worn for centuries by the oriental woman, found its way to Europe. It had its origin in the life-time of the Prophet himself, that is, in the story of 'Āisha's famous ride on a camel ; 'Āisha was one of Muhammad's wives. Once as she rode together with a young man on the same camel, lagging behind the caravan, her tardiness seemed good reason for gossip. Immediately an order was given that women should be kept in their homes and should veil themselves in the presence of strangers.[111]

Infinite is the number of little things of life, which are considered as integral components of western civilization : "Let us begin with the manufacture of paper, which made its appearance in the 12th and 13th centuries in Europe via Muslim Spain and Italy,[112] the embossing of

(110) Muller, *op. cit.*, I, p. 273.
(111) *Ibid.*, p. 133.
(112) Hitti, *History*, p. 347.
(113) *Ibid.*, p. 527.

leather which found its way from Morocco,[113] the inlaying of gold and silver into steel, which was imported from Damascus,[114] carpets, glass mirrors, stained-glass windows,[115] windmills which were made known through the Crusades,[116] the lute, the guitar and the cymbal,[117] cotton,[118] the ordinary palm,[119] coffee,[120] spinach,[121] lilac, jasmine and tulip,[121] the compass, which was invented by the Chinese and used by the Muslims in navigation,[123] social games : chess, draughts and card-playing[124] and finally the promissory note and the word cheque [125]

However, the most important contribution to European civilization is the idea and the period of chivalry, which the West owes to Persia.[126] There the ideal of magnanimity, dignity, pride[127] and reverence for women was created upon which the European nobility of the Middle Ages liked to pride itself. "Chivalrous games are the greatest curiosity, which the Persians have to offer foreign visitors to their

(114) *Ibid*, p. 528.

(115) *Ibid.*, p. 668

(116) *Ibid*, p. 667.

(117) *Ibid.*, p. 601.

(118) George Jacob, *Der Einfluss des Morgenlandes auf des Abendland vornehmlich wahrend des Mittelalters.* Hannover, 1924, p. 10.

(119) *Ibid.*, p. 81.

(120) *Ibid.*, p. 77 (substitute for the forbidden wine !).

(121) *Ibid.*. p. 82.

(122) *Ibid.*, p. 83.

(123) Hitti, *History*, p 699 ; see footnote (71) above.

(124) George Jacob, *Ostliche Kulturelemente im Abendlande* Berlin, 1902, p. 6.

(125) Jacob, *Einfluss* p. 48

(126) Kantorowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

(127) Jacob Burckhardt, Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien, Leipzig, 1926, p. 450.

country."[128] The model of all chivalry in the Orient as well as in the Occident is Saladin, the same sultan whom Lessing made the ideal figure of toleration.[129] All particular items are copied by the Occident: even the coat of arms originated in the Orient.[130] How many words of oriental origin have entered the usage of daily life: talisman, amulet, elixir, algebra, alcohol, syrup, soda, musket, admiral and arsenal,[131] corvette and jollyboat ![132]

The Fine Arts

LITERATURE

"Confess, the poets of the Orient
Are greater than we from the Occident."[133]

Perhaps nowhere are the influences of oriental civilization on the occidental of deeper and more lasting effect than in the field of the fine arts, in literature as well as in architecture: "only a man who knows and loves Hafiz, understands the songs of the Calderon," says Goethe in the Western-Eastern Anthology.[133]

We have to admit that chivalry seems to us inconceivable without the love songs. Both are as inseparable from each other as sun and moon.

---

(128) Muller, *op. cit.*, II, p. 4.

(129) *Ibid.*. II, p. 111; Philip K. Hitti, "*Chivalry*" in "*Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*," vol. 3, New York, 1942, p. 442: "Saladin (Salah-al-Din) exemplified all the virtues and graces of Arab chivalry. When the crusading army entered Jerusalem in 1099 it inaugurated the "Kingdom of God" by slaughtering some 2000 Christians and Jews. When Saladin retook the city in 1187 he accepted ransom for men, women and children and released several thousands who could not pay. Those same women and children found the gates of Tyre closed aganist them by Conrad and Italian sailors in Alexandria unwilling to take them on board without due payment."

(130) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 213

(131) Jacob, *Einfluss*, p. 10.

(132) Hitti, *History*, p. 529; see p. 20 above.

(133) Goethe, *Western Anthology, Hikmet Nameh, Book of Aphorisms.*

But first let us take one step backwards. Can we today think of metrical language without strophe and rhyme ? They also are integral parts of the whole of western literature. And yet nobody in the Occident ever thought of using them! "At the court of the Omoyyad Abdallah (888–912) the blind poet Al-Mukkadam Al-Kabri had dared to pierce the monotonous form of the Qasidas by a strophic organization,"[134] and Behramgur and Dilaram are named as the inventors of the rhyme.[135] The love for women created the love-song,[136] which not only celebrated the pains of separation, but also gave expression to love as such. This becomes the poetry of the troubadours of the Provence, which derives its origin and style from Persia.[137] Then came the hitherto entirely unknown poetry of the drinking-song[136] without which the life of mediæval students is unimaginable. The literature of the fairy tales of the Occident is again completely unthinkable without the eternally purling well of the Orient: "the Persian Rosibeh, usually called with his Arabic surname Ibn El-Moqaffa', opened by his Arabic translations of the 'mirror for princes' *Kalilah wa Dimna* (which had passed from India to Persia) the door to the abundant literature of fairy tales, which later culminated in the compilation of *The Thousand and One Nights. (The Arabian Nights)*. Its ingenious narrations were the joy of the Orient throughout the Middle Ages. Since the Crusades no European book of fairy tales or novels, from Ariosto and Boccaccio to the brothers Grimm, has lacked them."[138] Of course, there is mystical poetry and the romantic epos is not absent. And does it do any damage to Dante's renown, if we learn that "Ibn Shahid (11th century) in a strange epistle composed his critiques of the art

(134) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
(135) Goethe, *Western-Eastern Anthology*.
(136) Brockelmann *op. cit.*, p. 90.
(137) Hell, *Kultur der Araber*, p. 66; Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
(138) Muller, *op. cit.*, I, p. 469.

of his contemporaries in the form of a report about a tour through the valley of ghosts? This form was copied about twenty years later by a poet in Syria, Abu'l-A'la Al-Ma'arri, in a review of the leaders and masters of Islamic poetry in the guise of a trip through the next world."[139] A Spaniard proved that not only the full formal construction of Dante's *Divina Comedia*, but numerous episodes of this work, which were considered so far as extermely original, have their typical pattern in the eschatological literature of Islam, particularly in the "Mekkan Conquests" "Revelations of Mekka" of Ibn al-'Arabi.[140] And the sources of La Fontaine are the fairy tales of *Kalilah wa Dimna*.[141]

But it should not be left unsaid that the enemy of literature, which is unfortunately so modern again, the burning of books, was not unknown to the Orient.[142]

Formative Arts

We know very well that Islam accepted the Jewish law which forbade the making of pictures, and if in spite of this there are figurative representations among the followers of the two religions,[143] it still can be said that in this field Islam did not offer any stimulation to the West.

But European architecture was revolutionized by the Orient in a way that civilization of the Mediterranean Sea had not seen since antiquity; the pointed arch, originating

(139) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

(140) Asiny Palacios, *La escatalogia musulmana, en la Divina Comedia*, Madrid-granada 2nd ed. 1943 (engl. translation by Harold Sunderland, London, 1926 abbreviated). We must not forget the first creator of an alphabetical dictionary in the order of the last consonant of the words: Al-Jawhari (died about 1008, Hitti, *History*, p. 402.

(141) Hitty, *History*, p. 559.

(142) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

(143) Hell, *Kultur der Arber*, p. 88.

in Mesopotamia[144] made possible the filigree architecture of the Gothic, which completely ruled Europe for two and a half centuries. In place of the severe horizontal line of ancient architecture now for the first time we get the vertical line mounted, perhaps advanced, by the minaret, although this is said to be a copy of the Christian campanile[145] Gothic architecture finally destroys the theory stated at the beginning that everything given by the Orient to the West is nothing else than a restoration of Hellenistic civilization.[146] The second element which we owe to the East is the construction of the cupola. Certainly, the Pantheon in Rome had got its character through the wide, but very low cupola; but the cupola of Brunelleschi

(144) Id., *der Islam und die abendla Kultur*, p 127. It is probably an imitation of the leaf of the Bodhi-tree (Ernst Diez, *Die Kunst der Islamischen Volker*. Berlin-Neubabelsberg, 1915, p. 159) and as this tree plays an important part in Buddhism and Hinduism, it is clear that the Muslims quite consciously in an extremely clever way found a connection with the religious symbolism of the far East which in this way had its triumphal procession through the whole Occidental world. D. V. Cowen, *Flowering trees and shrubs in India*. Bombay 1952, 2nd ed., p. 65: "For antiquity and veneration the Peepul (Bodi in Malay) is unrivalled throughout the world. No other tree is claimed to have such long life

....

The Prince Siddharta is known to have sat in meditation under a Bo tree and there found enlightenment from which he became known as the Buddha. So, from then onward the tree was sacred to Buddhists. Hindus associate the tree with the three Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and worship it."

(145) Becker, *Islamstudien*, I, p. 492; according to Hell, *Islam u. abendl. Kultur*, p. 124, is a copy of the lighthouse of the Alexandria. Diez, however, traces its origin to Syria (p. 21).

(146) A typical representative of this opinion is Reinhart Dozy, *Spanish Islam*, London, 1913, p. 9: "We are not indebted to them (the Arabs) for a single great and fruitful idea." Spengler stands rightfully up against this opinion, *op. cit.*, p. 241: "the preposterous notion that the Arabs were spiritual epigoni of the Classical."

on the spire of the cathedral of Florence was the first high structure of this kind, which the Occident used in the building of churches, whereas the great mosques hardly ever lacked them.[147] They transmute the plain entrance of the temple into a very wide portal which should prepare one for the solemnity of the interior of the place of worship. And what did the Muslims do with the column, which in the classical construction of the temples had only the function of carrying the roof of the temple? "The column appears in another way in the structure of the Arabs: its constructive importance antedates by far the decorative one; not the form and harmony of the columns, but their number and arrangement give character to the building. In the Christian church the file of columns made possible the disappearance of the heavy and massive walls between the individual naves. The Arab fails to appreciate the real purpose of the columns and puts them into the service of the old, genuinely semitic delight of colossal things, the abundance."[148] They invent the court of arcades, that ideal combination of protection, which the house offers, and the liberty, which nature gives. They put life and change into the monotony of the Doric, Ionic or Corinthian

---

(147) Hell, *Islam u. abendl. Kultur*, p. 121: "the drawing near of the dome, which slowly became developed from the elliptical silhouette, to the pointed archsilhoutte is again an eastern loan." The Indian idea of the balcony is carried from the Himalayan countries to the West by the Turks. (De Beylie, L architecture Hindoue en extreme Orient, Paris, 1907, p. 71). The cross-aisle which we find quite often in cloisters and churches of the west, particularly in Sicily and Lower Italy, has its model in the architecture of the Alhambra (Diez, *op. cit.*, p. 177); and do not the baptisteries remind us in their forms of the ancient Persian tomb towers? Jacob, *Einfluss d. Morgenlandes*, p. 55, draws our attention to the fact that the churches of the order of the Templars in the West are a copy of the mosque of 'Umar in Jerusalem, which is painted in the background of Raphael's "Sposalizio."

(148) Hell, *Islam, u. abendl Kultur*, p. 177; N. Brunov, *Ubr einige allgemeine Problem der Kunst des Islam*, in "*Der Islam*," XVII vol. Berlin-Leipzig, 1928, p. 125/6.

systems of columns: is not Gothic art characterized by the constantly changing ornaments of the capitals of the columns? In one word, the brazen repetition of the classical style is succeeded in turn by eternal change: life and sensual enjoyment are the characteristics of the new architecture. And this sensual pleasure, this richness of colour, which makes itself felt in the gayness of the mosques—think only of the courtyard of great mosque in Damascus, or the mosques of the tomb of the Sultan Qait-Bai in Cairo or Alhambra—in the gayness of the churches of the Renaissance, it penetrates each house; the majolica art, which the Arabs had taken over, and the faience[149] decorate palace and castle of the wealthy classes of the Occident, and, following the Persian pattern, the art of illuminating and painting books, which once was highly respected, is developed in the West just as the European handicraft was founded for a long time only on Oriental imports.[150]

Islam and the Renaissance

Less discipline of thought and sensual pleasure—the deadly enemies of all asceticism—the enjoyment of life and violence, irreligion and the feeling of creating a new era, these in a few words constitute the spirit of the Renaissance. Why did those centuries look with contempt on the past? Where did they gain the courage to announce themselves as the prophets of a new epoch in history?

Nothing is more difficult than the construction of an unknown world, to entertain thoughts which are contradictory to one's own ideas in every respect. A new civilization or the changing of an old civilization into a new one needs, therefore, an impulse from the outside. A civilization

(149) Brockelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

(150) Diez, *op. cit.*, 192. Rembrandt learned from Indo-Islamic miniatures! (Friedrich Larre, *Ein neues Blatt von Rembrandts indischen Zeichnungen, Jahrb. d. kgl. preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, vol. 30, Berlin, 1909, passim.)

without contact with others is restricted to itself, withdraws into itself. Unless ideas stream in from the outside, the range of ideas is deepened, but not expanded; it is narrowed.

If in the Renaissance the prophecy of a new world was really converted from promise into fulfilment, this process had to be founded on new, foreign ideas, and new ideas could come from only one civilization—Islam. No other civilization was in as close contact with Europe as this one.

It was a long lasting process, by which the West became acquainted with the ideas of the Orient not a sudden flashing up of rousing concepts which could produce change in the Occidental world; it was a continuous, uninterrupted infiltration.

Not only at the centres of education as the universities of Paris, Padua and Toledo but also at the court of Frederick II did these two worlds touch each other, as an annoyance to the Church this German emperor had converted Lucera in the South of Italy into a Muslim military colony, where he maintained picked troops of 16,000 Saracens,[151] a Muslim colony in the very heart of the Occident! The continuous commerce which Naples, Amalfi, Sorrento, Pisa, Gaeta, Genoa and Venice had with the unbelievers[152] was much more important to these cities than the defence of Christianity. The crusades particularly brought the masses into close and permanent contact with Islam.

Let us summarize the essential elements on which the Renaissance was founded:

Averroism, constantly progressing, gave a new foundation to science. Neo-Platonism had projected a system

(151) Kantorowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
(152) Dennett, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

into the reality of the world, a system which had been constructed from the beginning of things. This reality had to adjust itself to the terminology of the notions. Aristotle and Averroes thought the reverse things as primary, notions as secondary ; they could formulate the problems of the world, based on observations. Now things asked man questions :

"They ask me questions so that I

Must listen to the things which fool me ever."[153]

Empiricism became the foundation of research ; physics and medicine could thus develop.

If Christianity preached asceticism, Islam preached wealth. Wealth, material wealth, is the indispensable foundation of art and culture. Where the people are poor they have no means for the support of the arts and the Italian emporia of the Levant trade piled up affluence, developed the spirit of modern capitalism in Europe which had been created by the Muslims. However, the Renaissance becomes important for the men of our time principally because of its art which has never been equalled at any time.

And here we meet a new problem : however impressive and however grandiose Islamic art is, yet in no aspect does it show human feeling, the personal touch which, for instance, makes the works of Michelangelo a part of our own personalities. The art of the Arabs remains for us a wonderful, but an "arabesque" art. If this nation found an outlet for its geometric talents in a unique way and thereby created fascinating masterpieces, unsurpassed in their ways, they, however, never reach our hearts in spite of all the symphony of colour and perfection of form. Why has this been denied the Muslims ?

(153) Ferdinand Avenarius, *Faust*, II,

The law which forbade the making of pictures lies between the art of Islam and the Renaissance. This law is the dividing line between East and West, which separates the two civilizations: "the International Date Line" of culture. If the Occident owes all new ideas to Islam which lead from the Middle Ages to modern times, the non-existence of the law of prohibition of pictures or better, the non-observance of the second commandment of the Decalogue, which also Luther did not recognize, permits art to perfect itself and to represent human affliction. But only the representation of human suffering gives us the psychical purification, the catharsis, which is the last and the deepest sense of tragedy.

Probably the question of the ultimate cause of the Renaissance has been rarely asked. Without the stimulation, without the slow penetration of the Scholastic spirit in every field of Islam, European civilization would have stood still, it would have been stranded as a ghetto civilization.[154] As Humanism is founded on the writings of antiquity, which the Muslims had rediscovered, so the Renaissance is based on the fresh blood which Islam brought to Europe: the Italian Renaissance is born from the combination of unhampered occidental sensual enjoyment and unlimited oriental thirst for knowledge: *ex oriente lux!*

(154) As the philosophy of life of the Islamic people "stood still exactly on the spot and has become now immovable through the centuries, where it had arrived at the beginning of the 7th (13th) centuries," (Muller *op. cit.* II, p. 236)—not influenced by other ideas.

NOTES

Footnote No 15 on Page 211 (continued)

The author has based his opinion on incorrect information. It is not true to say that the Prophet "was rich and lived like a Prince." It is one of the basic principles of Islamic economy—to which he fully conformed—that there are no "property rights" as we understand them. Man is entitled merely to the usufruct of what he holds and is fully accountable to God for it; see Qur'an, iii, 26, 108, 189; ix, 120; xv, 23, etc. As a matter of fact, even when Islam held sway practically over the whole of the Arabian peninsula Muhammad lived the life of poverty and dressed in patched clothes and part of the meagre dowry that he gave to his daughter Fatima was a couple of grinding stones! See Sherwani, *Genesis of Muslim Socio-Political Thought, Islamic Culture*, July, 1953.—[Ed.].

Footnote No, 105 on Page 230 (continued)

It is not known to what episode the author refers here. One thing is certain—there is no question of envoys or even the Prophet himself "reigning" in any accepted meaning of the term, for he only ruled under the laws laid down in the Qur'an. So far as day to day matters of importance were concerned, the Prophet is said to have told his companions that they were the best judges in worldly affairs.—[Ed].

Footnote No. 111 on Page 231 (continued)

The story about the Prophet's wife 'A'isha is not correctly stated by the author, and it is not true that "she rode together with a young man on the same camel". The episode occurred during the expedition against Banu'l Mustaliq in 5–6 H. She alighted from her camel for some purpose and fell asleep by a mere chance on the road side. She was discovered sleeping on the ground by one Safwan who was an officer belonging to the caravan. He was careful enough to lead the "mother of the Muslims" safely to the caravan, with 'A'isha sitting in the enclosed litter and Safwan holding the lead.

(Notes continued)

Again it is incorrect to say that this episode had anything to do with the wearing of the veil. As a matter of fact, the veil, meaning the covering of the face, has not been prescribed by Islam at all. As for the seclusion of women, it was a custom adhered to with great strictness in ancient Greece, passing through Byzantium to the Middle East. Says H. Goll in *Kulturbilder aus Hellas und Rom* (quoted in *Historians' History of the World*, III, 475). "There was no question of any intercourse with other men, in fact a wife withdrew if her husband by chance brought a guest with him...what Cornelius Nepos says about the Greek women is true. She does not appear at dinner except among relatives; she stays in the inner part of the house where no one is admitted but her nearest kinsmen." See also Robinson, *Everyday Life in Ancient Greece*; pp. 77 and 78; W. Miller, *Greece and the Greeks*, pp. 158 ff.—[Ed.]

ISLAM AND MODERN KNOWLEDGE

—L. B. BROWNE

THE present age is dominated by Science. That does not merely mean that we are provided with machinery and inventions that would have seemed to our grandfathers like a fancy dream from *The Thousand and One Nights*. The science that has come upon us so suddenly is more than mechanical inventiveness. It is a manner of thinking. The strange thing is that this method of thinking was begun 2,300 years ago by the Greek philosopher Aristotle, but that, for reasons that we need not go into now, his ideas lay more or less dormant for all those centuries, and then produced the combination of thinking and experiment which ushered in the scientific era.

Now, because the root of the new movement was thinking and not manual dexterity, the movement has affected not only the instruments and machines we use but also all our intellectual pursuits. The sort of geography which the present writer was taught in school half a century ago was not very different in method from what teachers in Greece or India were giving 2000 years ago. To-day geography is a science worthy of being the subject for an honours degree at Cambridge. History began to develop much earlier. Once of course it was nothing more than a chronicle of events, generally a more or less official chronicle, and as often as not fabricated to suit the political needs of the moment. But there were great historians from Herodotus onwards who tried to give history a greater accuracy and a more human interest. Even so, the last hundred years have seen revolutionary changes in the writing and reading of history. The scientific method has stepped in. Ancient

dates are checked by archaeological finds, some, with surprising accuracy, by determination of the proportion of radio-active carbon in substances like wood or bone which were once part of living creatures. Inscribed tablets have brought to our knowledge even the existence of peoples whose very names had been forgotten; the routes followed in ancient times by international commerce are shown by *ornaments or weapons which passed from one country to* another, for instance, the similarity of some of the jewellery and ornaments found in the Indus River basin with objects made by the pre-historic inhabitants of Babylonia. Migrations of tribes may sometimes now be accounted for by climatic changes the evidence for which can be read by geologists in the earth's surface. Even psychology comes in to show how mass movements of thought, and new ideologies, have urged nations to enterprises which have shaped history.

In such ways as these—and the whole catalogue of them would embrace almost all our thinking and a great deal of our doing—science has entered our life, and in many ways this has been mainly an experience of the twentieth century.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that religion has not escaped the influence of science. For while religion itself is a matter solely of the spirit, the expression of religion in theology and in conduct has an intellectual and a practical content. In England, as everyone knows, this impact of science came like a sudden typhoon soon after the middle of the nineteenth century, and was particularly connected with Darwin's theory about the origin of species. The controversy that followed was mainly concerned with the way in which the living creatures of the world were created. Most of the Christian religious leaders of the time felt that they were bound by their religion to accept literally the story of creation with which the Bible begins. This story describes creation as having occupied

six days. The order in which the living creatures appeared, for instance, all plants appearing before any animals, and indeed before the creation of the sun, moon and stars, is not compatible with modern knowledge. But the present writer is inclined to think that what really shocked the great mass of ordinary westerners was to be told that the world, which they had always regarded as a beautiful and more or less peaceful society of kindly disposed creatures, was really the scene of a grim struggle for existence, not only between tigers, scorpions and their victims, but even amongst sheep and doves and the flowers of the field.

What was the result? As always in such controversies, there were individuals on both sides who were determined not to budge from their position, those on the one side being ready (if the need arose, which of course it did not) to die as martyrs for religion, and those on the other side to stake everything on the truths of science as they saw them. Fortunately the great mass of educated westerners at the time were convinced of the truth of religion, and also could not believe that all scientists were fools. There must be, they felt, some way of reconciling the truths on both sides; the apparent opposition must be accounted for by the limitations of knowledge of the leaders of religion and science; the leaders on the religious side must be claiming territory which did not belong to them, and the scientists were just like young men with a new invention, imagining that their new invention could do anything and could not go wrong.

That was the position in the West some fifty years ago. Now one looks back with some curiosity at the old controversy. The modern Christian wonders how his grand parents could get any intelligent idea of God's creation without a knowledge of evolution. As for the scientists—it would probably be true to say that as many University Professors

of Science are church worshippers as Professors of Classics or English Literature. In England, if not in America, the old Darwinian controversy is a thing of the past.

Let us now turn to the position of science and religion as it now is in the world of Islam. There are large numbers of Muslims who are studying science in schools and universities, and taking advanced degrees in science. Others are pursuing studies in history, archaeology and literature according to the accepted scientific methods of the present day. Yet we do not hear either of an acute controversy in Islamic quarters between science and religion, or of any fresh presentation of the tenets of Islam as a result of the scientific impact.

It may be true of course that the particular problem raised by Darwin and his followers in the West does not need to arise in the Muslim world. The holy Qur'ān says of creation "God said Be, and it was," without defining the manner in which the created world first appeared. The evolutionary account of how it happened might just as well be true as any other. But, even if the question of the manner of creation can be set aside, other questions remain. It used to be said by the Muslim philosophers that a man does not light a fire. He may apply a torch to the wood, but God creates the fire at the same moment. Similarly they said that a man does not cut a loaf of bread in two. The man may apply the knife, but it is God who at that very moment causes the loaf to be divided. It is hardly conceivable that a Muslim physicist or chemist, accustomed to use the generalised laws of science, in which cause and effect are inexorably linked together, could agree with these opinions of the old philosophers. It is to be hoped that the Muslim scientist will not fall into the pit of Materialism and deny (as many thoughtless people in the West do) any activity of God whatever. But can he escape

the necessity of stating afresh the way in which God sustains His universe? It may of course be contended that the philosophy of Islam is only a human attempt to understand and explain the bearing of revealed truth on our external experiences, and therefore that, while the revelation remains unchanged, the philosophy can and must change as new generations bring new experiences into the debate. If that is so, the world would benefit if Muslim philosophers would apply themselves to such new problems as these.

It may be thought that it is possible for a man to keep his ideas in two separate compartments of his mind, with one part to accept loyally the truths of his religion as they have been handed down for many generations; and with the other part to accept the new knowledge and the new outlook which modern science has brought. A man may indeed be so humble about his own intellectual powers that he feels bound to say: 'These problems are too difficult for me. I must leave them to others who are more competent.' That is a reasonable position so long as there are others who are tackling the problem. For we must be assured that all truths are compatible with one another. Just as there is one God, and there cannot be another, so there must be one body of truth, consistent within itself. We dare not hold to any statement as being true unless it is true in God's sight, for that would mean that we are holding something to be true which God knows to be a lie. Just as we must strive for absolute goodness, which is the course of action which God in His goodness commands, so we must strive for the absolute truth which He desires us to know, because it corresponds to reality as He knows it.

The question has been much discussed whether it is incumbent on Muslims of the present day to bring modern methods to bear upon their historical works, and particularly upon the *Hadith*, on which so much of our knowledge of the life and character of the Prophet depends. As is well

known, there were in existence a vast number of traditions, which the great collectors of *Hadith* sifted. Their method was a meticulous study of the chain of witnesses to each tradition. Modern historians who are faced with a mass of ancient material do not restrict themselves to one method in choosing what they believe to be reliable. For example, one of their methods is to look for a certain amount of consistency in the words and character of the man concerned. An absolute consistency is not to be expected, since even the greatest of men change their ideas or emphasis with years, or say different things to suit different occasions. Yet the greater the personality of the man is, the more one expects to gain a general impression of his character, which is supported by the incidents of his life and by the majority of his recorded words. In such studies, the subjective element cannot be wholly eliminated, but the scientific historian should try to soak himself so much in the material of his study that his general impressions are formed by his material rather than by his personal views or those of his contemporaries. As an example one might refer to the Islamic studies of the late Ignaz Goldziher. Although he obviously wrote as an "outsider," the present writer does not remember finding anything in his works to show whether he personally was a Jew, a Christian or an atheist. All that is really necessary for such a study, apart from intellectual ability, is that the scholar should approach his subject with sympathetic understanding, and with a determination to see and describe the truth.

How far Islamic origins are a proper subject for such scientific historical study, is, of course, for Muslims themselves to decide. But it is certain that the fruits of such study would be of immense value to Islam. The modern Muslim, armed with the established results of scientific study, would feel that he was in possession of historical facts about his religion which could stand up against any hostile criticism.

A further point that would probably follow from this new spirit of scientific enquiry would be on the lines of what we now call the Comparative Study of Religions. It is generally accepted by Muslims that the revelation that was vouchsafed to the Prophet of Mecca and Medina was the same as had been given to all previous prophets, some of whom are mentioned by name in the Qur'ân. In the last half century or so a great deal of attention has been paid to this very question. In the comparative study of religions the aim (as the name itself implies) is to find out not only what the ancient sages of China, Israel, Greece and India believed and taught as the word which had been revealed to them, but also how the contents of their messages compared with one another. The differences between the various religions are found to be as remarkable as the similarities. For instance, while Judaism, Christianity and Islam look forward to a future in which the individual personality will be enhanced, Hinduism and Buddhism set their eyes on a goal in which the individual personality will be absorbed into what might be called the universal spirit of the universe. Many modern Christians have undertaken this comparative study, which requires a sympathy towards people of other faiths. That they should have done so is the more remarkable because in past times Christians have often appeared bigoted in their assertion that no truth was to be found in other religions. For Muslims, who have been taught from the beginning that God had given revelations to previous prophets, it ought to be easier to approach the scientifically historical study of other religions with the expectation of finding at least some measure of truth everywhere.

One of the results of such work as has already been carried out in the West has been to show an unexpected amount of borrowing by one race or religion from another. It has of course never been doubted that Christianity in its

inception was deeply indebted to Judaism, and in its early years to the wisdom of the Greeks. How much it was also influenced in its early days by the various Asiatic religions, which were pressing into the Roman Empire at that time, is still a subject of debate. The important point that begins to emerge is that, if revelation has not been restricted to a single prophet, or to a single race of men, there is nothing to be ashamed of in borrowing truth from any quarter.

The application of this result to the history of Islam is again a matter for Muslims themselves to consider. Outside observers believe that the authors of the religious and philosophical systems which developed in the first three centuries after the Hijra, when Muslims were in close cultural contact with Christians and Jews, and through them with the cultural inheritance of the Greeks, were enabled to bring outside ideas to their understanding of what they found written in the Qur'ān.

No doubt it would be difficult for a Muslim of to-day to take the initial step of imagining the possibility that there had been a development of doctrine in Islam, still less of imagining that the orthodox doctors of Islam were in any way indebted to non-Muslim sources. But the old cry that the Muslim mind is forever closed is no longer true, if it ever was. In the twentieth century no minds can remain closed, and the one tendency which we must all applaud is that opening of mind which is bringing all the peoples of the world towards a greater sympathy and mutual understanding. The modern Muslim, like all other moderns, is studying chemistry, physics, biology, history, political economy and sociology. All these new studies must eventually go towards the make-up of his mental life. He does not stop and say: 'This idea is unacceptable because it comes from America' or 'because it comes from Japan.' It would seem a strange thing if there was not at the same time a sharing of the

various strands of human thought about the things of eternal reality, which are the subjects dealt with by theology and philosophy. On these most serious things of life there is likely to be difference of opinion for many years to come, but we can at least take the first step towards the final unification of the human spirit by a willingness to study and understand the ideals in which the other half of the world finds life.

MUHAMMAD 'ABDUH AND THE QUEST FOR A MUSLIM HUMANISM†

—P.J. VATIKIOTIS*

THE question of Muslim response to Western influence has been often put to the Muslim intellectual. The beginnings of reform in Islam and the Near East in general first found expression in men like Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad 'Abduh, Ameer 'Ali, and Muhammad Iqbal. Western civilization, its science, and its material benefits, were known to these intellectuals, enabling them to establish rapport with the West. One must be cautious, however, not to identify educational contact with the inner life of the two peoples—the Muslim world and the West. For, traditionally, they have run apart. The contact between East and West on a mass level has been preconditioned and marred by political considerations, the intellectual crosscurrents notwithstanding. Such contact has been further complicated by the unreadiness of the Muslim to rationalize, since his religion never constituted for him an abstract intellectual system. Islam, on the contrary, is regarded by him as an active existential religion that discourages isolation and quietude.

Nevertheless, the gradual awareness by the masses of their heritage and national destiny today has diffused the responsibility of response to the present challenges into a

---

† The writer wishes to acknowledge the research assistance of Mr. Jabir Ali Abbas, a graduate student at Indiana University, and the kind editorial help of Prof. Edward H. Buehrig of Indiana University.

* Prof. P. J. Vatikiotis, Department of Government, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

wider spectrum of society. The intellectual, therefore, cannot merely superimpose a modification of traditional values in the light of his Western training. He must beware of the vacuum that may be created and provide a solid replacement of indigenous origin and character albeit perforce, synthetic.

Can there be a so-called "protestant" revolt within Islam today? The Protestant Reformation in Europe paved the way for the relatively free development of modern science, philosophy, and historical criticism. Conversely while Europe lay dormant in its darkest hours of inquisitorial ignorance, Muslim thinkers were probing nature and philosophy. But the contentment of Imperial power, extending too far to be adequately controlled, allowed for degeneration from within, until destruction from without became inevitable. Ultimately, prolonged occupation, together with rigid emulation in matters of religion and thought, engendered an atmosphere of inertia and social stagnation.[1]

Response by the Muslim intellectuals of the last seventy-five years to the challenge presented by Western penetration has been apologetic in the main. It romantically attempted to recast Islam as a super-philosophy containing all the elements that were operative in the phenomenal rise of the West. The Muslim apologist, in contrasting the lack of authoritarianism in Islamic politics to European political history, for example, is only offering

---

1. One cannot fairly claim mental sterility in view of developments like the Puritan Wahhabi movement in the 18th century, Panislamism of the 19th century, and more recently the Salafiyya and Muslim Brotherhood movements, and the secularist tendencies of Taha Husain, Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, and Khalid Muhammad Khalid of present century.

superficial resistance to Western influence.[2] So far, the mere claim that the religion, properly interpreted and understood, allows for all exigencies of change, has proven insufficient stimulation for improvement on the mass level. For, it is necessary to get people thinking in terms of this viability as a matter of course. On the contrary, the old pre-Islamic resignation to inscrutable *dahr* or blind fate, was transformed socially to the just as rigid and immobilizing Islamic *qadar* or predestination, without the benefit of a dynamic concept of destiny.

Apologies are neither useful nor adequte today, for they tend to petrify the Islamic community before a fast shrinking, yet shaking, world community. Twenty years ago the attempts at rational revolt against the rigidity of the past by men like Taha Husain and 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq outlined the fundamental question before the Muslim Near East; which question also carried with it the seed of possible salvation. These two men were asking their people, in effect, the extent to which they were willing to apply the rules of modern historical and rational criticism to their scriptures and tradition. Thev were both gravely concerned with the proper evaluation of the authority of tradition. Can reform cope with the power of tradition in Islam today? Can a rationalist adaptation come about to mould a new tradition similar in development—not content though—to that distinguishing the modern Western tradition from its medieval predecessor[3]

2. See M. 'Abduh, *al-Islam wa'a radd 'ala muntaqidihi* (Cairo, 1923.) More recent works are those of Muhammad al Ghazzali, *The Beginning of Wisdom* (NETP, Amer. Council of Learned Societies, Washington, D. C., 1953), and Sayyid Qutb *al-adala'l-ijtima'iyya fi'l Islam* (Cairo, n. p. d.).

3. See Taha Husain, *Fi'l adabi'l-jahili*. 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq, *al Islam wa usulu'l-hukm*. Presently, Dr. Taha Husian calling for the simplification of the written Arabic language as the only means of combating illiteracy on a mass scale. He proposes mainly phonetic

Excluding the superficial and limited impact from the West, one cannot overlook the few but creditable efforts along these lines within the Muslim community itself. For, it is the indigenous forces alone that can effect lasting changes in the Islamic world. Thus, it is relatively uncommon knowledge among Westerners that the expression of abstract thought and the vivid satirization of social, political, and economic problems has been developed to highly articulate standards by Near Eastern contemporary writers. Fiction, drama, and periodical literature have become vital and integral aspects of the lives of the increasing literate masses Like any new literature, it does not purport to serve art for art's sake but tends to be didactic, and is often loaded with social and political messages. Let not the New Critic, however, persuade us to overlook its value as literature, for today it is the most readily available

---

orthography; a radical deviation from classical orthographic rules of grammar and syntax. See *al-Risala* (literary monthly published in Cairo), *al-Ahram* and *al-Gumhuriyya* of June-August, both dailies published in Cairo, for a debate on this subject between the Taha Husain literary force and those who support the classicist Mahmud 'Abbas al 'Aqqad. Earlier, Taha, in an effort to urge Egypt and the Arabs towards modernization, has taken the extreme and rather dubious position of claiming that the native Egyptian mind is totally Hellenic — and ergo Western — in its orientation. See his *Mustaqbalu'th-thaqafa fi Misr* (Cairo, 1939). Granted that ancient Egyptian civilization may be considered Mediterranean, the Hellenization of the Egyptians cannot be assumed without argument at any period of history, especially under Alexander's diadochic empire of the Ptolemies. The present writer, on the basis of available researches in that period of history, is inclined to the view that the Hellenization of the Egyptian population and community never really occurred, the Alexandrian School notwithstanding. The tendency among the Macedonian-Greeks was to live apart and distinct from the subject peoples as a ruling aristocracy. What is more, the indigenous population led by their powerful priests tended to actively or passively oppose the foreign rulers. As it turned out, the Greek Ptolemies eventually adopted more of the native Egyptian culture. See I. G. Bell, *Egypt* (Oxford, 194), and Mahaffy, *Progress of Hellenism in Alexander's Empire* (Chicago, 1905).

reflection of the ideological currents and struggles agitating the Islāmic mind and world.[4]

In the light of these remarks, it is felt that a systematic analysis of the Islamic reform movement is appropriate, beginning with the early attempts at a modern Muslim "humanism."[5] This paper will confine itself to the expression of Muhammad 'Abduh in *al-'Urwa'l-wuthqa*, who, the writer begs to submit, was one of the first "humanists" in modern Islam.[6] The discussion will consider strictly the leading articles by 'Abduh that appeared in the newspaper *al-Urwa'l-wuthqa* from March 13, 1884, to October 16, 1884.[7] It does not consider, however, the articles or news editorials published in the paper about specific questions like Egypt, the Sudan, British policy in the East, etc.[8]

---

4. For example, the dramatists Nagib ar-Rihani (d. 1948) and Tawfiq al-Hakim. See excellent studies by H. A. R. Gibb, "Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature," I, II and III. *Bulletin School of Oriental Studies* (London) Vols. IV and V. The desire for reform and characterization of the Muslim dilemma is to be found expressed at its very best in Ahmad Amin's autobiography, *Hayati* (Cairo, 1952).

5. The fact should not be overlooked that an Arab-Muslim humanism of letters, science and philosophy developed during the Abbasid period especially. See discussion in Louis Gardet, *La Musulmane* (Paris, 1952), 273–322.

6. Muhammad Iqbal and Ameer 'Ali of India and Pakistan may perhaps be considered as humanists par excellence in modern Islam. However, they belong chronologically to another generation—that of the present century. See Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought* (1938), and Ameer 'Ali, *The Spirit of Islam* (1902).

7. Text used is that of al-mataba'a'l-ahliyya, Beirut, 3rd ed., 1933. Another text of these articles is reproduced in Sheikh Rashid Rida, *tarikh al-ustadh al-imam al-shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh* in 3 Vols, Vol. I, 290 ff. (Cairo, 1931).

8. These summary news items and editorials can be found in Part II of the Beirut edition under the title "*an-nataf wa-'l-akhbar*," pp. 270–325.

'Abduh's movement for religious reform is "humanistic" because he was primarily interested in giving an ethical focus to the religion of Islam; in short, a new native system of values not at variance with modern scientific society. As a brand of "humanism" it is still more interesting because it does not blindly subscribe to the romantic confusion of many other Muslim modernists and apologists but tends to base its strength on a reformulation of systematic theology and doctrine with the gradual re-introduction of historical criticism into the study of tradition. This "humanistic" trend is important today not for the Muslim intellectual alone but even more for the mass of Muslim believers. Professor W. C. Smith of McGill University discusses the need for "a synthesis......of the Islamic religious tradition with an intellectualist perspicacity of modernity—a synthesis which, with due regard to Point IV, seems the area's most fundamental need."[9] The transformation of isolated individual conceptions of reform into a system of social thought and action remains the foremost requirement in the modern Muslim communities. Recent developments in Egypt, for example, indicate that such a public philosophy and system of values are absolutely necessary for the development of a strong nation.[10]

The need for an ethical system, guided by rational criticism and insight, has never been greater in the Muslim world than it is today. Old regimes have been overthrown,

9. See his "The Intellectuals in the Modern Development of the Islamic World," in *Social Forces in the Middle East*, ed. by Sydney N. Fisher (New York, 1955, p. 200).

10. See the English translation of the new Egyptian Constitution promulgated in January 1956, and adopted in June 1956, in *Middle Eastern Affairs* (February, 1956), regarding the emphasis placed on social democracy, justice, people's rights and duties. See also the speeches of President Abd-el-Nasser in *al-Ahram* and *al-Gumhuriyya* for the months of June and July, 1956.

but old systems and habits of thought and action have not been totally discarded. In order to retain their leadership, present rulers must transform political revolution into social and political patterns of thought acceptable to the Muslim masses. The claim, for instance, by Egypt's present rulers to a new "national philosophy," "clan," and vitality must prove empty unless related to an emergent tradition.

There can never be a completely secular attitude in Islam. Neither can traditional attitudes be legislated out of existence.[11] It is important, therefore, to realize at the outset, that any new cultural personality that is to develop in the Muslim East must of necessity be a synthetic one, drawing from the Islamic and pre-Islamic ethnology of the area and its people, as well as from its inevitable intercourse with non-Muslim ideas and institutions.

A rigidly cast socio-religious philosophy is presently unable to perpetuate the old value system. The latter has been seriously challenged to the extent of external economic and political control. Only a "humanized" version of the religion can institute a personal and collective system of ethics—ergo a theory of action—dependent to a large extent on the principles of rational and historical criticism and introspective evaluation.

The ethical appeal of Islam and its introspective admonitions were first examined and advocated in modern Islam by Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905).[12] In basing this discussion on 'Abduh's writings in *al-'Urwa'l-wuthqa*, the

---

11. Even in Turkey the official severance of the religion from the State had its repercussions among the Turkish public. On this subject, see Bernard Lewis, "Islamic Revival in Turkey," *International Affairs*, XXVIII (January, 1952), 38–48.

12. The Mu'tazila school in medieval Islam as well as Imam al-Ghazzali (d. 1111) may be considered among the foremost advocates of a viable system of Muslim ethics.

attempt is being made to throw light upon the issue: should the Muslim East develop into a modern cultural force on the basis of Islamic unity, or on the basis of independent and inter-dependent cultural groups most of whose ethnic personalities are already predetermined and crystallized by pre-Islamic factors ? In other words, can Islam—the faith, *per se*—adequately replace the Pakistani cultural and ethnic personality and complexion, the Turkish, the Egyptian, the Syrian, Iraqi or Persian ?[13]

When Jamal al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh founded the secret society of *al-'Urwa'l-wuthqa*, the Muslim countries were in a state of political and social retrogression and frustration. Egypt, a suzerain of the Ottoman Porte, had been occupied by British forces in 1882, putting an end to the 'Orabi revolt.[14] Persia was being exposed to more direct foreign influence as a result of Russian and British interests in the country.[15] The Ottoman Porte itself had just gone through a brief and abortive attempt at constitutional reform in 1876-78 under the leadership of Midhat Pasha, reverting to the despotic lethargy of the new Sultan 'Abdul Hamid. Inevitably, the "indissoluble bond" established by these two men was primarily devoted to the resuscitation of the Islamic spirit and faith as bonds of unity against outside divisive influences. In this respect the editorials of 'Abduh in the journal, *al-'Urwa*, may be viewed as apologetic and hortative exhortations to Muslim action against foreign infiltration. This exhortation or apologia is neither

13. For a brilliantly incisive analysis of this question, see E. A. Speiser, "Cultural Factors in Social Dynamics in the Near East," S. N. Fisher (ed.) *op. cit.*, 1–22.

14. See 'Abdur Rahman ar-Rafi'i, *ath-thawaratu'l-'urobiyya*, and W. S. Blunt, *Secret History of England in Egypt*, for a sympathetic account of this revolt.

15. For a history of the conditions in Persia during the latter part of the 19th century, see E. G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution*, and Sir Percy Sykes, *Persia*.

complete nor at its polemical best, however, unless considered in conjunction with his *al-Islam wa'r-radd 'ala muntaqidihi*.[16]

Jamal's hope, at least, was to propagandize the specific political aims of a Muslim League on the basis of brotherhood of all Muslims. This League, we must assume, envisaged a political union of the Muslim East under one ruler, preferably a *khalifa*. Realizing the remoteness of this aspiration, however, he sought to publicize more immediate struggles of Muslim freedom such as the Egyptian question, the Sudan, and Persia.[17]

The publication, then, was meant to serve as a polemic mouthpiece of Jamal for his interpretation of the Islamic cause against Britain. Fortunately, it acquired a twin character when it also served as a literary vehicle for the expression of 'Abduh's reform ideas. The claim, therefore, in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* that *al-'Urwa'l-wuthqa* expressed the views of Jamal entirely is not justified as we shall attempt to show in the succeeding pages.[18] Although 'Abduh may have voiced, in part, Jamal's ideas in it, he was already disillusioned with such programmes as political pan-Islam, realizing the many prerequisites to genuine reform. It would be difficult even to accept without reservations Zaidan's conclusion that both men agreed on aims but disagreed upon the means to achieve them. 'Abduh's basically pacifist-Sufi temperament permitted him to prefer the wiser, albeit slower, process of education over political

16. Cairo al-Matb'a'r-Rahmaniya, 1928. This work is actually a collection of essays refuting certain contrasting views on Christianity and Islam by Gabriel Hanotaux.

17. See Mohd. Rashid Rida, *Tarikh*, I, 283, 306 ff., who talks of immediate and distant aims of *al-'Urwa*.

18. III, 678.

eruption.[19] And, herein lies the difference: to Jamal, Pan-Islam was primarily a political concept. 'Abduh, on the other hand, recognized its limitations in a Muslim world already directed and preconditioned by political considerations.

Instead of bringing about a strong Muslim union under a *Khalifa* Jamal's pan-Islamic agitation resulted in no unity at all. The individual development of Muslim nation states in the past thirty-five years rather became the trend of political evolution in the Muslim world This is neither a derogation nor a nullification of Jamal's effect upon the awakening Muslim mind. But this particular Muslim development was destined to give a more lasting character to 'Abduh's concept of religious and social reform. For, the expectation that Jamal's "Urwa" would effect a revolution in the East never materialized. Neither was the combined pan-Islamic policy of Jamal and Sultan 'Abdul Hamid received warmly by the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman empire in 1909, or 1914, under the Young Turks of Enver Pasha. On the contrary, these subjects sought their national salvation outside the purported caliphal authority.[20]

By editing the journal, 'Abduh was laying the theoretical foundations of a neo-religious *esprit de corps*. In pleading for the observance of an ethical system favourable to progress and strongly influenced by rational processes. 'Abduh under-

19. See *Mashahiru'sh Sharq* I, pp. 305–307. Proof of 'Abduh's pains taking approach to the problem of Muslim reform are his efforts at improving the Azhar curriculum, his fatwas, and public education policies. See *Tarikh*, Vols. II and III. For Jamal's political personality programme, see *Encyclopædia of Islam*. I, 1008-1010; E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, 2–30; Zaidan, *op. cit.*, II, 61; Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, 13 ff; *Tarikh* I, Introduction, 73., ff., (Beirut ed. *al-'Urwa*), 1–20.

20. Thus Rashid Rida's remark that *al-'Urwa* "began to inflame the fires of rebellion in the East," is too far-fetched and projectory. See *Tarikh*, I, 304.

lined the essence of a Muslim "humanism." Considering disbelief (jilhad) a "social disease," he introduced a novel concept of social responsibility for the first time on the basis of the verse, "Verily, God will not change the state of a people until they change their own state."[21]

The starting point of 'Abduh's "humanist" approach to Islam and an Islamic "feeling of unity" is his idea that Islam is a "social religion," which has combined in its message the welfare of man in this world and in the hereafter. Therefore, if disbelief be a "social disease" causing Islam's impotence, it becomes necessary to (a) free thought from the shackles of *taqlid*, or blind emulation of patristic tradition, and depend on the authority of "historical proof" and (b) consider religion as being compatible ("friend of") with scientific knowledge ('ilm). In view of these basic assumptions, 'Abduh inevitably confined his main interest in religious reform as the basis for all other reforms in the Muslim East. His philosophy of reform and "religious humanism" extended into his concept of political independence and maturity. Insisting upon internal reform first through the spread of education and the elevation of the public character to a standard of social responsibility, he gave political and social maturity precedence and priority over political independence without them[22]

21. H. Q. xiii; II. It is interesting to note that 'Abduh invokes this verse repeatedly in *al-'Urwa*, but in an incomplete manner. Other translations render the same verse, "Lo Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts; and if Allah willeth misfortune for a folk there is none that can repel it; nor have they a defender bes de Him." (under-scoring is mine) (Pickthall, *The Glorious Qur'an*, 1954). The deletion must have been deliberate on the part of 'Abduh' for this second part of the verse renders almost meaningless the freedom of action suggested in the first.

22. This position was characterized by the late Ahmad Amin in his autobiography, as 'Abduh's "rational nationalism" in contrast to Mustafa Kamal's "emotional nationalism." See *Hayati*, (Cairo, 1952), p. 82.

Before proceeding to formulate 'Abduh's "humanist" approach to Islamic reform, one must assess briefly the obstacles to a "humanism" of any kind in Islam "Modernism," says Professor Gibb, "is primarily a function of Western liberalism. It is only to be expected, in consequence, that the general tendency of modernists would be to interpret Islam in terms of liberal humanitarian ideas and values. In the first stage they contended that Islam was not opposed to these ideas ; but they soon went on to claim that Islam was the embodiment of them in their highest and most perfect form.[23] This overall criticism can be fairly directed at the non-theologian liberal reformers and modernists who, in their hasty enthusiasm, assumed that the adoption of Western political and legal institutions would *ipso facto* produce political and social institutions of liberal and democratic nature [24] It cannot be equally directed at a trained theologian like 'Abduh, who came closest to reformulation of the fundamental position of Islam.[25]

Nevertheless, 'Abduh, in attempting a rational-humanist reformulation of Muslim doctrine had to contend with three major solidly anti-liberal forces in the Islamic socio-religious organism. First was Tradition and the sanctity it receives from Sacred Law, or Shari'a ; codified as it was some thousand years ago into a *corpus juris* of lasting value, and defying change. Thus Tradition, the strongest bulwark of the Islamic socio-religious structure, has resisted change as well as Muhammad 'Abduh's attack upon it in the guise of his "anti-taqlid" campaign. Second was the highly transcendental Quranic concept of Allah, which has contributed to the regimentation of the processes of organic

23. See his *Modern Trends In Islam*, (Chicago, 1952), 69-70.

24. *Cf.* Ameer 'Ali, *Spirit of Islam* and Sayyid Qutb, *al-'Adalal-ijtima'iyya fi'l Islam.*

25. See his *Risalatu'l-tawhid*,

change, especially on the lower strata of Muslim society. The slightest attempt at its immanentization could mean apostasy.[26] Third is the ever-present anti-rational disposition of orthodoxy as well as the average Muslim.[27] The masses, for example, continue in their intuitive adherence to the Qur'ān, in addition to the multitude of cultish accretions that make up the sum-total of their daily religious experience and worship, Point Four notwithstanding.

Cognizant of this dilemma, 'Abduh stood between the outright secularist on the one hand, and the romantic modernist on the other, by insisting upon the systematic reformulation of dogma without its divorce from the religious experience of the masses—in fact, the only possibility open to organic change in present-day Muslim communities. His hope for a more dynamic concept of God's relationship to the believer was intended to render personal religious experience an existentially strong stimulus for action toward the best possible life. Muhammad 'Abduh was well aware of the difficulty inherent in a strongly monotheistic religion that assigns to man an eternal destiny (popularly referred to as "fate") and retribution in the hereafter. It is, perhaps, this fundamental problem which led Professor Louis Gardet to conclude that what is required in Islam today is a "creative humanism," because, so far, "Islamic humanism" has sought refuge in the glorification of the past, glossing over traditional works, and maintaining traditional life.[28]

---

26. The constant struggle in Muslim history between Orthodoxy and the Sufi Mystics is the paramount instance of the struggle between those who desire a more immanent—therefore, nearer—God, and the overpowering transcendent one of the Qur'an.

27. This is even seen among many of the modernists themselves, whose apologetic for Islam is more of an emotional and romantic presentation of perfect system—a dishonest intellectual attitude at best.

28. See his *Cite Musulmane*, 273–322.

From the beginning, 'Abduh grasped the obstacles inherent in religion ossified by tradition and complicated by the concept of nationalism. Consequently, any humanist reform on his part had to presuppose a "humanism with God," (that is, one which would never question the notion of a supreme being). He came closest to a humanism that called for the highest life possible; without unnecessary limitations on man's virtuous achievements. It had to be a religious-oriented humanism in contrast to the secular-nationalist variety if it were to benefit the masses; one in which secular values become part of the popular endeavour and social philosophy through an invigorated religious doctrine. It is this sensitive understanding on 'Abduh's part of the importance of religious reinterpretation in any cultural development—a point discarded, misunderstood, or glossed over by the majority of Muslim modernists—which led Professor Gibb to boldly emphasize that "He ('Abduh), more than any other man, gave Egyptian thought a centre of gravity and created, in the place of a mass of disconnected writings, a literature inspired by definite ideals of progress within an Islamic framework."[29]

The difficulty, however, in Muslim religious reform derives from the closeness between the spiritual and temporal, and more so, the political. Thus, 'Abduh's so-called "liberalism" of religious interpretation must be limited by this factor.[30] In analysing his call for religious reform as the only possible means to a better society, one detects certain contradictions. In his article, "Nationality and the Religion of Islam," 'Abduh rejects the idea of "Nationalism."[31] He refutes it as a "natural state of being or nature"

---

29. "Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature," *BSOAS*, Vol, Part IV, 757–758.

30. *Tarikh*, I, 307–308.

31. *Al-'Urwa*, 47–54.

and recognizes it only as an acquired feeling. Thus, Islam transcends it for the man who belongs to the Muslim faith, once his belief is firmly entrenched, is diverted from his nationalism and racialism. Rather he turns from the *special* bond to the *general* one—that of the believer."[32] Because Islam is not merely an admonition for the good and the true, it is also a just legislator who does not discriminate between one nationality and another. He invokes the example of the Orthodox Caliphs to emphasize the lack of nationalist fanaticism in Islám, saying, "he (the caliph), nothing elevated him to a position of rulership other than his reverence and obedience for the law, and his care in observing it."[33] This instance, however, cannot be exemplific, inasmuch as the Orthodox Caliphs were the leaders of the strongest political party at the time—an Arab one—leading the newly unified tribes into vast conquests under the banner of Islam. Neither does Islamic history bear out his assertion that divinely inspired behaviour through the proper observance of the scriptures has always replaced, in Islam, the "racial" and "national" bonds. During the Abbasid hegemony, for instance, Persians, Turks, and Afghans had a crystallized pre-Islamic ethnic character and personality which Arab-inspired and dominated early Islam was never able to break down or replace. This very insistence by Muhammad 'Abduh on the return to the true religion as the only source of power seems to indicate clearly the dilemma of reform in Islam generally. First, the precept has not been followed in the recent economic and political development of the modern Muslim nation-state like Turkey, Egypt and Iraq. These national entities seem to have rejected the idea that the source of Islamic prowess at one time was the true religion; which was all-inclusive for human needs and the building of a prosperous

32. *Al-'Urwa*, 49.

33. *Tarikh*, 51.

society. Recognizing the beginnings of this dual, but mutually contradictory, political development, Muhammad 'Abduh was faced with the problem of retaining the ethical content and precepts of Islam, while trying to render more flexible the legislative aspects of the religion in the light of modern requirements.[34]

Although 'Abduh begins by rejecting the idea of Nationalism, as a counteraction to individual national units in Islam, his own attempt at a "religious patriotism" leads him to a befuddled concept of religious "nationalism." He considers national fanaticism (ta'aṣṣub) bad, in contrast to a religious feeling of solidarity. One must be careful with 'Abduh's discussion of Nationalism for it is full of contradictions and erroneous presuppositions.

First, Muhammad 'Abduh appears to use *ta'aṣṣub* synonymously with *'aṣabiyya*, or *esprit de corps.* The latter he calls a characteristic of the human soul and personality, causing it to defend its own. The ensuing self-pride urges members of a community to unite in the promotion of good society. He goes so far as to assert that this strong feeling for one's own moulds a nation's virtues.[35] Apparently, 'Abduh is trying to establish a "religious patriotism" that would counteract individual national ones. Consequently, he criticizes secularists who wish an anti-or non-religious modernism by reminding them that "religion" is the foremost sustainer of a virtuous secular life, thus emphasizing the humanist aspect of Islam.

> Religion is the first teacher,...and best guided leader for the human souls in their pursuit of knowledge...the greatest educator...training the souls in the good values and virtuous character, inculcating them with justice, urging

34. See especially his articles "The Decline of the Muslims," and "Christianity and Islam," *Al-'Urwa*, 72–95.

35. *Al-'Urwa*, 99. Professor Charles Adams in his "Islam and Modernism in Egypt," 58 ff., renders jinsiyya as race.

> them to mercy and magnanimity, and especially Islām, which elevated a nation from the deepest savagery...to the highest wisdom and civilization in the shortest time...[36]

"Religious patriotism" ('Abduh's concept of *ta'aṣṣub*), then, is more sacred and pure, implying broader benefit than national fanaticism.

Pursuing his warning to the secularists, 'Abduh asserts further that "nationalism" (al-waṭaniyya) among Muslims is a limiting factor, often causing disunity. Thus, he deplores those who discarded Islam without understanding the true nature of western-imported Nationalism. It should be noted that, under the circumstances, 'Abduh was reacting to the conditions of the Muslim world towards the end of the nineteenth century. But his contention that there is no *nationality* (jinsiyya) for Muslims other than their religion is an exaggeration, its Qur'ānic and prophetic assertions notwithstanding.[37]

It was indicated earlier that the dictum, "the faithful are brothers" was not able to prevent the development of nationality—conscious groups within Islam, as well as among the Christian world community. The early nationalization of Islam into an Arab-dominated movement proved an obstacle to any acculturation through the religion in a multi-cultural environment. Historical events were to show that Islam was not free from the political ascendancy of national groups within its pale. The Turks with their Ottoman Empire are a case in point. Thus 'Abduh's article "Islamic Unity" is perhaps an oratorical appeal to unity at best, but glaringly anachronistic with historical development and facts. And yet, together with his "Nationality and the Religion of Islam," it shows a deep understanding on the part of Muhammad

36. *Al-'Urwa*, 103.

37. *Ibid.*, 107, 150.

'Abduh for the necessity of a native system of values for the Islamic community at large.[38]

Throughout his articles in *Al-'Urwa*, Muhammad 'Abduh is trying to establish three major requirements for religious reform that would constitute the beginnings of a "humanist" tradition in reformed Islam. First is what the present writer calls a system of virtues to be developed and spread by the strength of a reformed religious teaching. Such development of virtue on a religious basis would instigate an inclination for introspection that would encourage internal reform, constituting the second requirement. The third consideration would be that of a public philosophy for the Muslim community evolved within the context of the problems and needs of a modern society.

Beginning with "Virtues and Vices,"[39] 'Abduh indulges in sermons on virtue in an effort to establish a "social didache" so to speak. The essence of his effort in this series, to revitalize a living religious humanism among the Muslim masses, may be summarized in the new focus he gives to the social duty and responsibility of the faithful. "The sum-total of virtue is justice (al-'adl) in all actions.[40] The principle of justice would eventually lead to a situation wherein "every citizen will respect the right of all; not willingly choosing an aim contrary to that of the whole; not seeking aims sharply contradictory to those of the group until the whole presents a solid structure."[41]

This didactic call to virtue is based on a *dynamic* belief in God; dynamic in the sense that it is a *moving* concept to action. 'Abduh here is deliberately trying to activate the expectation of a future life in the beyond into earthly

---

38. *Al-'Urwa*, 47–53, 146–157.

39. "Al-fada'il wa'r-radha'il," *Al-'Urwa*, 131, 145.

40. *Al-'Urwa*, 132.

41. *Ibid.*, 134.

improvement. For, he urges that "hope (eschatological or otherwise) is a feeling that (should) produce (s) action, carrying the soul (self) against evil...towards strife and hard work."[42] The belief in God, therefore, should produce action, because "none despair from the spirit of God except the non-believers." 'Abduh's view of God, moreover, is one of a Supreme Being who demands the attainment of a virtuous and just life through a developing effort for knowledge as a positive good. Despair, then, as a result of collective resignation, is a definite sign of sickness and disbelief.[43]

In order to further activate the belief in God into social action, 'Abduh offers a bold admonition in that "weeping does not raise the dead, neither does pity bring back the past, nor sorrow prevent catastrophe. Action [work] is the key to success."[44] He considers this God's test of the faithful for true belief leads to fruitful activity.

Reference was made earlier to 'Abduh's "humanism with God." It is important, therefore, to bear in mind that moderation in character and the acquisition of virtue are to be attained within the religious framework, with the new difference that the religion is to be bolstered up by the deliberate and conscious attempts—striving, if you wish—of man This is what 'Abduh means when he reminds his readers that "Allah shall not change the condition of a folk until they change what is in them," and when he introduces rational choice over against *taqlid*. For these virtues established by the Divine Law as definite realities are accepted and lived only after they have been defined by man's reason[45] Thus God has revealed His way forever. It is up to man to look into himself with a critical eye, for he cannot blame other

42 Article entitled "Al-'Amal" *Ibid.*, 177-113.

43. *Ibid.*, 145

44 *Al-'Urwa* 156.

45. *Ibid.*, 203-212.

than himself for his shortcomings. And, in the final analysis "change" in people must come about through reason and perception.[46]

"God promised those who believe and do good that He shall make them inherit the earth as those before them." It becomes imperative, therefore, that justice be the rule upon which men shall act for the attainment of the good. This presupposes the corollary rule that public interest is the basis for the perpetuation of the State, demanding human cooperation. And, as oppression causes destruction, justice becomes the only progenitor of a happy life. "God has rendered the agreement on the public welfare, and cooperation in the attainment of the general good, sources of power...and comfort in this life, enabling man to arrive at eternal happiness in the hereafter.[47]

But any discussion of "change through action" in Islam is inevitably confronted by the traditional question of "free will and predestination." The treatment of this delicate subject by Muslims has been frequent as well as a source of great controversy. It is, indeed, characterized by polemic and much confusion. Basically, it concerns the Muslim idea of a transcendental God, and the destiny of the believer who must carry on with an earthly existence. Today, the problem facing the modern Muslim consists primarily of his ability to gauge this wide gap between an omnipotent God and His weak subject, man, who must, of necessity, grapple with the bitter adversities of daily living. Those, of course, who held to the utter helplessness of man and his subjection to the predetermined will of God regardless of his deeds do not recognize the existence of the problem at all. Those, however, who are puzzled by the fact (a) that man has certain potentialities that he, on his own,

46. *Ibid.*, 242. "Min nuri'l-'aql was sihhati'l-fikr wa ishraqi'l-basira."

47. *Al-'Urwa*, 23c.

can develop maximally and, perhaps, actualize on earth, and (b) that there are certain living examples in the world today of groups and communities that have accomplished a more materially comfortable and better organized existence, feel that the problem is a pressing one for the revitalization of the Muslim community. Their task is difficult, for it is not simply a matter of accepting or rejecting freedom on the one hand and predestination on the other It is more complex in that they—if Muhammad 'Abduh is taken as an example—must approach the question within its religious ramification.

'Abduh views the problem of freedom as choice *with obligation demanded by the Shari'a* or Sacred Law.[48] This view is not too different from our western concept of freedom under or within the wide scope of a higher law. He realizes, however, that the famous question of *al-qaḍa' wa'l-qadr* has pre-Islamic origins extending into the Muslim tradition because of the natural proclivity of cultural ethos to perpetuate itself through generations. Consequently, 'Abduh's task was to give this whole question a modern interpretation—even character—that would differentiate it from its antecedent. This he tries to do by manipulating *al-qaḍa wa'l-qadr* into a concept of *destiny* in which man has an important role to play. One might call this 'Abduh's "activization of the popular belief in fate" for possible action in the pursuit of a better life, instead of popular inactive[48] resignation.[49] For 'Abduh realized that the concept of destiny in Islam after the early Muslim conquests was nothing like the "force civilatrice" of the West.

There are also dangers inherent in Muhammad 'Abduh's efforts to gauge the power (qadr) or will of God with the helplessness of the believer and his freedom of

48. Article entitled "Al-qaḍa wa' l qadr," *al-'Urwa*, 114-130.

49. *Ibid.*, 123-130.

choice. In later writings, for example, he accuses the Persians for heretical accretions to Islam.[50] One might well ask if 'Abduh assumes that only "Arab Islam" is true Islam. In other instances he refers to the pollution of Islam by foreign elements as in the case of the Abbasides. The question may be asked again whether Islam should have remained Arabic. Is 'Abduh calling for an Arab-Islamic unity?[51] Needless to say, this would be a most deterministic position. It may be quite possible, however, that Muhammad 'Abduh is seeking a base from which to attach traditionalism. For he holds that it is not really what is in the Qur'ān regarding free will and predestination that presents a problem. It is rather the rigidity superimposed by *taqlid* which seeped into the social order, creating apathy in soul movement, or better still, soul atrophy.[52] And he seems to accept the theory that the work of man has much to do with the growth of his soul. It is in essence 'Abduh's attempt to render the relationship between man and his Creator a closer and more viable one, reflected in man's relentless struggle for a better life in a human earthly society.

There is frequent reference today to "rapid change" in the Muslim countries. The term is especially favoured among Westerners genuinely or superficially concerned over events in the Islamic world since the end of the second World War. It is a term current in the press as well as in civic and women's clubs. The questions "what change?" "in what direction?" and "how?" are rarely examined with any persistence. Some hold, for example, that "dictatorship" will be the means of change; others console themselves with technical assistance as the vehicle of

50. See his "Al-Islam wa'r-radd 'ala muntaqidihi," 37–40, where he refers to al-jabariyya, an Aryan heresay imported into Islam by Persians from India.

51. *Al-'Urwa*, 191–194.

52. *Al-Islam wa'r-radd 'ala muntaqidihi*, 38.

future economic and social change, reaching from these foundations, in good time, to the political structure. Whatever the differing opinions, all are agreed there *is* change.

The present writer may be accused of choosing a poor springboard for discussing his concern over change in the Islamic world, especially the Arab Muslim countries. It may be argued that after all Muhammad 'Abduh died over fifty years ago, that there are today governments in the Muslim world operating on relatively modern bases; that talking of a Muslim "humanist tradition" is irrelevant, because a man would much rather drink healthy milk made accessible to him by the kind services of Technical Assistance than go on with religious practices of dubious value and benefit. May I submit, then, as justification for seeing in Muhammad 'Abduh a basis for a more flexible Islam, the proposition that material change by no means implies change in individual and social modes of thought, habits of feeling, and action at the mass level? Such fundamental change in the few who control the reins of government is not adequate proof of comparable change in the community at large.

Inter-war and present experience in the Islamic countries points to the inability so far of the Muslim "intellectual" and political leaders to undergird whatever "rapid change" has occurred with a viable social philosophy acceptable to the masses. Outright secularists, demanding the relegation of religion to the sphere of individual conscience without bearing on social and political legislation and action, are very few.[53] There is, on the other hand, a plethora of "educated" Muslims who have romantically

53. An interesting, although weak, example is Khalid Muhammad Khalid, author of *Min huna nabda'* (Cairo, 1949), with his attack upon "clericalism" and orthodox conservatism in Islam. His other two works, "Citizens not subjects" *(Auwatinun la ra'aya)* and "Democracy Forever or Absolutely" *(ad-dimoqratiyya abadan)* are a pursuit of his attack upon orthodoxy and a call for the complete separation between politics and religion.

accepted the theory that the adoption of certain political forms will of itself produce change. But they fail to realize that mere form, however ideal, can produce only what the social context permits. The adoption of western political institutions, supremely embodied in a written constitution, is a case in point. Those intellectuals failed to grasp the reality that a constitution setting the political, social, and economic purposes of a society can survive and produce the desired results only in so far as the community is willing to allow. This willingness is contingent upon the understanding not merely of a very few, but on the consensus of the whole society. Thus a constitution alone does not guarantee desired change. It must receive its life in practice from the social context. If a constitution, for example, envisages change and development as a goal of the body politic, it is imperative that the individual members of the society accept the maxim that there is no *final* quality in their present existence, which is liable to change with circumstances. Flux rather than a predetermined order becomes the rule and guiding principle. It is easy for the Muslim intellectual to rationalize such a principle against traditional teaching. But it is more important that the mass accept it *emotionally*.

It is this confusion on the part of the western educated Muslim that deprives him of influence. His thought, though "liberal," fails to provide the intellectual conditions for the healthy and steady development of Muslim society. Those who reject religion as useless find themselves lacking any contact with the masses. Those clinging to religious orthodoxy refuse to re-examine their position in the light of a changing world, thus gradually alienating all those inclined to creative thought.

Min huna nabda' has been translated into English by the American Council of Learned Societies, Washington, D.C (1953). See also review of this book by PJV in PEN Bulletin (UNESCO), London, October-December, 1952.

Muhammad 'Abduh set out to revitalize society by bridging the gap between the perplexed educated Muslim and the orthodox believer. He recognized the dangers in the dichotomy of separate systems of value for the few and the many. He saw the necessity of an indigenous value system in which all could participate. His preoccupation with religious reform was based on the assumption that religion reflects the cultural personality—the soul, if you wish—of the Muslim. For generations religion had moulded the Muslim's view of man and the universe. Muhammad 'Abduh recognized the need of a satisfying psychological experience to accompany the Muslim's re-examination of his position involving the hitherto forbidden "unknown." He felt that the new intellectual experiences resulting from such examination would provide a dynamic element in a society that had long resisted change.

The late Professor Charles Adams in characterizing the contents of the organ of *Al-'Urwa'l-wuthqa* summarized the basic ideas expressed in the journal as (1) the unity of all Muslims without racial distinction, (2) the necessity of returning to the rules of religion, and (3) the warding off of foreign influences.[54] These ideas accorded with the professed, albeit secret, aims of the Society. It should be emphasized, however, that throughout his active teaching and writing, Muhammad 'Abduh actually came very close to introducing into Islamic thought an evolutionary concept of historical development. Hence his attack upon *taqlid* by (a) the purification of the mind from superstition, (b) striving for human perfection through independent reason, virtue, and reasonable conviction, and (c) education since human knowledge is acquired not by dispensation but through investigation.

'Abduh felt uneasy about Jamal al-Din's nationalist interpretation of Islam. The "religious patriotism" he tried

54. *Op. cit.*, (Oxford, 1933), 58-64.

to substitute for it was a necessary prerequisite to a religious basis for reform. He understood well that the nationalism of the West was confined among Muslims to the few intellectuals, but was unintelligible to the masses. His humanism, therefore, was never wholly utilitarian but rather bridged the gap between a transcendental God and a dynamic society seeking, and badly needing, organic change through the application of honest individual introspection and historical criticism. For liberalism to impress the average Muslim, it must first break down theological petrifaction. 'Abduh took the first steps in this direction by reformulating doctrine. He sought to revitalize Islamic religion through systematic revision and new expression.

The Romantics in modern Islam retreated into dubious mysticism. The conservative apologists, by virtue of their defensive position, presented ridiculous interpretations of historical fact and dogma. Finally, the secularists alienated themselves completely from the mass of citizens. Muhammad 'Abduh's position differs from that of all these inasmuch as he tried to bridge the gap between a transcendent God and His *active* subjects—what was referred to earlier as the basic dilemma of Muslim reform—by introducing the idea of personal virtue and social ethic, making possible the belief in a transcendent God to be reflected in man's active life of endeavour towards higher goals.

What disturbed Muhammad 'Abduh was the disconnection between social action and religious belief. Bringing about a viable relation between the two was one of his primary concerns. His choice of *education* as the fundamental means to that end is significant. For 'Abduh, contrary to many superficial modernists, was aware of the necessity of a vigorous value system within the community. This would afford a distinction between change genuinely accepted by the masses and that formally embodied in superimposed institutions from non-indigenous sources without public

understanding. Thus, 'Abduh preached a liberal and humanistic Islam, free of rigid traditional formulations and invigorated by rational and historical methods of criticism. He advocated belief in Man as part of the greater belief in God, on the assumption that human values are largely formulated by earthly experience.

IBN KHALDUN'S CONCEPT OF THE ORIGIN, GROWTH AND DECAY OF CITIES

—MANZOOR ALAM

IBN KHALDUN, a distinguished, bold and independent Arab scholar of the fourteenth century appeared on the intellectual horizon of Islam when the power and prestige of Islam and its intellectual brilliance, having passed their meridian glory, were revealing signs of decay on all sides. The intellectual legacy of Ibn Khaldun thus remained in oblivion for centuries, both in East and West. It was only towards the end of the 17th century that Ibn Khaldun was introduced to European scholars by D' Herbelot[1], but western thought showed no interest in his works till the beginning of the 19th century when Sylvester de Sacy[2] published a lengthy biography in 1816 and Von Hommer Purgstall[3] studied critically Ibn Khaldun's theories on the decline of states and published a German translation of some passages of the *Prolegomena*. However, the real resurrection of the intellectual achievements of Ibn Khaldun was brought about in 1858 with the publication in Paris of the Arabic version of his *Prolegomena* by Quatermere[4] and in the same year in Cairo by Shaikh Nasr Alhurainy. A decade later with the publi-

(1) D' Herbelot: Bibliotheque Orientale—1697.

(2) Sylvester de Sacy: *Biography Universelle*—1816.

(3) Von Hommer Purgstall: '*Uber den Verfall des Islams nach den ersten drey Jahrhunderten dev Hidschrat.*' 1812.

(4) In 1858 the *Prolegomena* appeared in Paris in three volumes, edited by Quatermere, after a manuscript of Royal Library, within the collection known as "Notices et Extraits des Manuscripts de la Bibliotheque du Roi," occupying Volumes XVI to XIX,

cation in Paris of M.D. Slane's complete translation of th
Prolegomena (Les Prolegomenas de Ibn Khaldun, (1863–68) i
French, appeared in different languages critical studies of Ib
Khaldun as a philosopher of history, Kultur Historiker
economist, sociologist and geographer written by scholars o
repute. Unfortunately, none of these scholars has criticall
appraised, evaluated and compared Ibn Khaldun's concep
of urbanization, although the entire fourth chapter of th
Muqaddimah is devoted to a discussion of the factors con
tributing to and the principles governing the origin, growt
and decay of cities. Scattered references to this aspect ar
also found in the first, third and fifth chapters. Muhsi
Mahdi's[5] excellent study of Ibn Khaldun is probably a solitar
exception. The following is an attempt at a critical analysi
and a comparative study of Ibn Khaldun's exposition of th
principles of urbanization.

IBN KHALDUN'S BASIC APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF HUMAN SOCIETY

It would not be beside the point here to refer to th
basic approach of Ibn Khaldun to the study of human societ
as that would assist a better appreciation of his analysis a
regards the characteristics, forms and functions, and growtl
and decay of cities.

Ibn Khaldun claimed to be a scientific historian, and to
him history "is information about human social organizatio
which itself is identical with world civilization. It deal
with such conditions affecting the nature of civilization...an
with all other institutions that originate in civilizatio
through its very nature."[6] The scope of history was thu
widened and its concept changed from a mere faithful chronic

(5) Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History*, Chapter I
V, pp. 209–16 (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1957.

(6) *Muqaddimah*, (tr.) F. Rosenthal, Vol. I, p. 71.

ing of events in time perspective to a "record of man's social development dependent on natural causes, and resulting from the impact of environment and the reaction of individual and group."[7] This comprehensive nature of history covers every aspect that contributes to giving shapes to human civilization, stage by stage and age by age. In fact it is all pervasive, for he surveys the human scene in its entirety to understand the principles that govern the evolution of human society. He tried to establish casual relationship, or rational order and a fundamental unity among the social, political, economic and spatial aspects of the development of human civilization. To leave no doubt as regards the interpretation of his concept, he reasserts his view-point in the following words: "I omitted nothing concerning the origin of races and dynasties, concerning the synchronism of the earliest nations, concerning the reason for change and variation in past periods and within religious groups, towns and hamlets... sciences and crafts, gains and losses, changing general conditions, nomadic and sedentary life, actual events and future events, all things expected to occur in civilization. I treated everything comprehensively and exhaustively and explained the arguments for and causes of its existence."[8] While treating everything exhaustively and comprehensively, he pursued the scientific principles of keen observation and comprehensive accumulation of facts, their careful sifting, rational classification and accurate description without prejudice and partisanship. He fully realized that proper understanding of any single human phenomenon would necessarily entail an appreciation of other connected factors, because each is inevitably and inseparably linked with the others. Ibn Khaldun emphasised the basic and underlying unity of all the branches of knowledge and attempt-

(7) N. Schmidt, *Ibn Khaldun, Historian, Sociologist and Philosopher*, New York, (1930) page 16.

(8) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I/p. 18.

ed their synthesis in his exposition of human society. He adopted the critical and analytical method only to sift the truth from the spurious. He was essentially interested in discovering the essence of civilization, and to express that his inventive genius and creative intellect introduced the "Science of Culture." This proved a penetrating medium to explore the causes and express the interrelationships that bind together the various cultural aspects, and the cultural with the environmental factors. To him human society was essentially dynamic and organic, undergoing continuous change, manifesting discernible patterns and following discrenible causes.

Application by Ibn Khaldun of Ecological Principles

The organismic concept of the development of human society led him to apply the ecological principles in studying and understanding the genesis, growth and decay of human civilization. He observed and reflected upon the fact that every social unit possesses the character of an organic unit and the structure of its life history comprises three distinct phases—juvenile, adult and senile. Human society, although tempered with cultural factors, is peculiarly symbiotic in character, since it passes through all those phases and possesses all the characteristics which comprise the life cycle of an organic substance, plant or animal. Ibn Khaldun himself observes, "The world of elements and all it contains comes into being and decays. This applies to both its essences and its conditions—minerals, plants, all the animals, including man and other created things and specially the conditions that affect man. Sciences grow up and then are wiped out. The same applies to craft and to similar things."[9] Human society has to experience the biotic processes because of man's intimate association with the organic world for his food and shelter. Like plants man

(9) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, p. 278.

is in need of nutrition, growth and generation, and as in the case of animals, his appetites and choleric power seek correct adjustments. "These needs and desires are strong drives that direct human action and intention. They may be elemental and primitive, but they are powerful and persistent."[10] His emphasis on the submission of man to the general laws which govern animals shows his awareness of the principles of ecology. He at the same time understood that human behaviour was not simply determined only by this intimate relationship of man to the physical environment and the world of organism. There are other factors too. Man is distinguished from animals by four distinctive qualities as enumerated by Ibn Khaldun:[11] (a) ability to think; (b) restraining influence of a strong authority; (c) man's need for food and his efforts to make a living; (d) civilization. He too, like Park, recognised that "human society, as distinguished from plant and animal society, is organised on two levels, the biotic and the cultural. The cultural superstructure rests on the basis of the symbiotic substructure, and the emergent energies that manifest themselves on the biotic level in movements and actions reveal themselves on the higher social level in more subtle and sublimated forms.[12] Man's relation, therefore, to the world of intelligence and his rational approach to the problems of his society impart a purposeful motive to human movements. Man sets before himself certain ideals which manifest themselves in the shape of evolving civilizations. It is this idealism of man that lifts him above the animal plane, yet the cyclic character peculiar to plant and animal life is a dominant characteristic in the evolutionary process of human society as well. "Society is nothing but

---

(10) M. Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History*, p. 192.

(11) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, p. 84

(12) R.E. Park, *Human Ecology*: The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. XLII, July 1936; p. 13.

a while in the universal current of things; it goes away as everything does. Life is like a rhythm; every change necessitates the contrary, every rise is followed by a fall."[13]

Further elaboration of the ecological principles applied by Ibn Khaldun is obtained when he discusses the origin of society and rise and fall of dynasties. The fundamental ecological processes of competition, co-operation, conflict, dominance and succession operate also in shaping the human society. George Simmel observes: "Society exists wherever a number of individuals enter into reciprocal relations with one another." Ibn Khaldun also in the 14th century had expounded a similar basis for society. He considered co-operation essential for the emergence of social organisation even in its most primitive stage: "God created and fashioned man in a form that can live and subsist only with the help of food. He guided man to natural desire for food and instilled in him the power that enables him to obtain it. However, the power of the individual is not sufficient............Thus he cannot do without a combination of many powers from among his fellow beings............ Through co-operation, the needs of a number of persons, many times greater than their own (number), can be satisfied "[14] Co-operation is thus at the root of every social organization. Co-operation on an intensive basis confined to a restricted number generates that dynamic force of human organization, group-feeling, which initiates a chain reaction of the ecological processes. Group-feeling is the creative force governing the evolution of civilization Its initial vigour unleashes a force of intense competition and conflict through which society registers marked progress. The emergence of a dominant group imparts stability to the social organization, thereby allowing full play to the creative

(13) M.A. Enan *Ibn Khaldun, His Life and Work*—Sh. Muhammad Asharf, Lahore, India.

(14) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, p. 90,

ability of man leading to the development of optimum civilization. This stage of civilization may be compared with the climax condition and the dynamic equilibrium obtained at a maximum biological potential of the dominant plant species. The climax having reached, civilization ceases to grow and stagnation sets in. The forces which contributed to the phenomenal growth of civilizations lose their vitality and begin to decline at an accelerated pace. The zenith of civilization marks the culmination point of its evolution. It generates such forces at its height that civilization begins to recede and decline. During this final stage the people are prone to live luxuriously and "luxury corrupts the character...the soul acquires diverse kinds of evil and sophisticated customs. This points towards retrogression and ruin......The dynasty shows symptoms of dissolution and disintegration. It becomes affected by the chronic diseases of senility and finally dies."[15] The death of one ushers in a fresh vigorous and youthful current of civilization and the ecological processes of competition, dominance and succession reassert themselves. This natural process of disintegration is essential if the dynamic processes of change and growth in the structure of civilization are to be maintained. Ibn Khaldun considers civilization to be cast in the mould of constant change and continuous movement. In the words of Professor Flint, "He expresses himself repeatedly and in various forms the general truth that history is a collective continuous movement, an incessant and inevitable development."[16] Ibn Khaldun formulated the norm and enunciated the principles which he applied in assessing critically the various stages of evolution of the human society. He was primarily interested in discovering the effect of position, in both time and space, upon human institutions and human behaviour. He recognized the internal bonds that unite the manifold

(15) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, p. 341.

(16) R. Flint, *The Philosophy of History*, p. 169. (William Blackwood and Sons—Edinburgh, 1893).

aspects of civilization and that during the rise and fall of civilization influence and causally determine each other. He fully appreciated "the complex dynamism of the rise and fall of civilization," and the "need to inquire into the manifold relationships.........as they manifest themselves during the different stages of its development."[17] And thus Ibn Khaldun's 'Science of Culture' like the modern human ecology is "fundamentally an attempt to investigate (i) the processes by which the biotic balance and the social equilibrium are maintained once they are achieved and (2) the processes by which when the biotic balance and the social equilibrium are disturbed, the transition is made from one relatively stable order to another."[18] These complex forces and processes of civilization reveal themselves distinctly in urban forms and functions. The city reflects the characteristics of its age, carries the impress of its past and epitomizes the ideals of the civilization it represents. It therefore forms an inevitable link in the evolution of human society. Realising its significance, therefore, Ibn Khaldun has at length dealt with the manifold aspects of urbanisation in the *Muqaddimah.*

The growth of a city, in the view of Ibn Khaldun, is a natural stage in the evolutionary cycle of civilization. It is a physical manifestation of the social growth. It expresses the humanised aspects of the spatial phenomena. Mumford and Vidal de La Blache express similar views. The former thinks that the 'city is primarily a social emergent,'[19] and the latter remarks that "a city, in the full sense of the word, is a social organization of much greater scope it is the expression of a stage of civilization........."[20] Ibn

(17) Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History,* p. 203.

(18) R.E. Park, *Human Ecology,* "The American Journal of Sociology," Vol. XLII, July, 1936; p. 15.

(19) L. Mumford, *The Culture of Cities,* p. 6.

(20) Vidal de la Blache, *Principles of Human Geography,* p. 471.

Khaldun treats the city and its institutions as an important aspect of civilised culture and its existence, according to him, is "for the satisfaction of man's desire for luxury, refinement and leisure."[21] The capital cities are ostentatious manifestations of the glories and the majesty of a state. In them are concentrated the best that a civilization has to offer. They are homes "of the highest achievements of man in art, literature and science."[22] They represent the optimum stage in the development of human society.

Ibn Khaldun treated the cities not only as historical facts and social phenomena but considered them as physical entities as well. He therefore analysed carefully and examined critically the various factors, cultural and natural, contributing to the origin, growth and expansion of cities. To him cities represented a vital aspect of civilization performing a variety of specialized functions in the economic and cultural fields. The unity, he recognised, was a product of time and impress of each period was indelibly marked on its life structure. He equally appreciated the city as a geographical phenomenon and in his analysis of the distribution and size of the cities he made it abundantly clear that they were closely linked with the climate and the resources of their respective regions.

ORIGIN OF CITIES

The development of cities is next in stage of hierarchy to the Bedouin civilization. It is only when the nomads have reached a certain level of civilization and have raised themselves above the subsistence level that they turn their attention to comforts and conveniences and consequently 'they build large houses, and lay out towns and cities for

(21) Muhsin Mahdi. *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History*, p. 209. (George Allen and Unwin—London).

(22) *Great Cities of the World*. Ed. W.A. Robson, (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1954,) p. 105.

protection."[23] There are certain pre-requisites to the establishment of a city: (1) The peaceful and steady progress of civilization; (2) a sustaining force to guarantee peace and tranquillity in the realm and also to stabilise the pace of progress; and (3) an agency to remove the state of insecurity of the cultured, yet defenceless, people of the city as a further guarantee to progress and prosperity. Thus royal authority precedes the evolution of cities. "This because when royal authority is obtained by tribes and groups, (the tribes and groups) are forced to take possession of cities for two reasons. One of them is that royal authority causes (the people) to seek tranquillity, restfulness and relaxation, and to try to provide the aspects of civilization that were lacking in the desert. The second (reason) is that rivals and enemies can be expected to attack the realm, and one must defend oneself against them."[24] Thus royal authority, defence and the existence of peace, in the opinion of Ibn Khaldun, are the major contributory factors in the origin of a town. This analysis by Ibn Khaldun of political factors being paramount is fully corroborated by Tout, a great authority on medieval town planning: "The political necessity for town making arose earlier than economic need. In the humble beginnings of the new towns of the Middle Ages, military considerations are always paramount. A strong ruler conquered a district adjacent to his old dominions or wished to defend his frontiers against the neighbouring enemy. He built rude fortresses, and encouraged his subjects to live in them."[25]

Apart form the political and geographical factors conditioning the site of town, the famous author of the *Prolegomena* seems to betray complete ignorance of the econo-

---

(23) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. 1, p. 249.

(24) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 237.

(25) Mumford, *Culture of the Cities*—Secker and Warburg, (1945), p. 25.

mic, strategic and inertia factors that also played quite a prominent role in the location of medieval towns. That he was aware of the significance of accessibility in determining the geographical extent of any kingdom is clear from his statement that "each dynasty has a certain amount of province and lands, and no more."[26] And yet the fact that he fails to appreciate this is all the more suprising. He is aware that the capital city is the nerve centre of a kingdom. "The centre is like the heart from which the (vital) spirit spreads. Were the heart to be overrun and captured, all the extremities would be routed."[27] In spite of his keen appreciation of the role of the capital city, he makes a vague statement about the regeneration of certain capital cities: "Frequently it happens that after the destruction of the original builders of (a town, that town) is used by another realm and dynasty as its capital and residence.........The life (of the new dynasty) gives (the town) another life. This has happened in contemporary Fez and Cairo."[28] This statement seems to suggest that only political accidents dictate the choice of capital cities as if the cities, in themselves, had no inherent worth to attract the new dynasties. Probably the political factors in the age of Ibn Khaldun were so preeminent and predominant that other factors could be safely overlooked.

LOCATION OF A TOWN

The city is a product of expanding human needs. It is therefore a rational expression of the cultural aspects of man. The setting of a city however, requires certain favourable natural factors for its future growth and expansion. With the changing requirements of society the site and

---

(26) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, p. 327.

(27) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 329.

(28) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 237.

situation of the city also are altered and only those sites and situations which constantly respond favourably to the expanding needs of human society have the potentialities for optimum development.

During the age of Ibn Khaldun the location of a town pivoted on and was conditioned by physiographic factors. Towns were dwelling places as also places of defence. "Therefore, it is necessary in this connection to ensure that harmful things are kept away from the towns by protecting them against inroads by them. and that useful features are introduced and all the conveniences are made available in them ....one should see to it that all the houses of the town are situated inside a protective wall. Furthermore, the town should be situated in an inaccessible place, either (built) upon a rugged hill or surrounded by the sea, or by a river so that it can be reached only by crossing some sort of bridge... In connection with the protection of towns against harm that might arise from atmospheric phenomena, one should see to it that the air where the town is (to be situated) is good, in order to be safe from illness."[29] Thus protection against external enemy and security against harmful atmospheric effects were the primary considerations in locating a town. Having enunciated the general principles on the lines of Aristotle, Ibn Khaldun enumerates the various geographical factors that are to be kept in view while deciding upon the site of a city : "The place should be on a river, or springs with plenty of fresh water facing it. The existence of water near the place simplifies the water problem for the inhabitants, which is urgent," but marshy areas which pollute the atmosphere and are breeding ground of harmful germs should be avoided. "Another utility in towns for which one must provide is good pastures for the livestock of (the inhabitants). Every householder needs domestic animals for breeding, for milk and for riding. (These animals)

(29) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, pp. 243–44.

require pasturage. If the pastures are nearby and good, that will be more convenient for them, because it is troublesome for them to have the pastures away. Furthermore, one has to see to it that there are fields suitable for cultivation. Grain is the basic food. When the fields are near, the (needed grain) can be obtained more easily and quickly.

"Then, there is also (the problem of) wood to supply firewood and building material. Firewood is a matter of general concern. Timber, too, is needed for roofing and for many other necessities for which timber is employed.

"One should also see to it that the town is situated close to the sea to facilitate the importation of foreign goods from remote countries. However, this is not on the same level with the afore-mentioned (requirements). All the (requirements) mentioned differ in importance according to the different needs and the necessity that exists for them on the part of the inhabitants."[30]

Ibn Khaldun was probably not the first Arab scholar to deal with the subject. We have it on the authority of Enan[31] that al-Farabi had also elaborated on these aspects, but his treatment was purely philosophic, whereas Ibn Khaldun's is empirical and social. His statement, therefore, pertaining to the physiographic requirements for the town planning is candid and concise and covers the fundamentals governing the location of cities. He also realized that requirement patterns vary from region to region as is evident from his discussion of the coastal and border towns.[32] He is, however, silent about the physical aspects of town planning. The value of his statement on town planning would

(30) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, pp. 246–47.

(31) M. A. Enan, *Ibn Khaldun—His Life and Work*, pp. 140–142 (p. 137).

(32) *Muqaddimah*, *Ibid*., Vol., II, p. 243.

have been greater had he thrown light, like Aristotle, on the principles that govern the town patterns, the laying out of the major arteries of the city and the direction of its physical expansion. If he had dwelt upon these aspects, we would have been in possession of a valuable critical appreciation of the Arab concept of town planning. Anyway this should not detract from the merit of his careful analysis of the environmental factors affecting town location. It would be too exacting to expect him to throw light on the modern requirements, because today social results are the outcome of mechanical shocks. In his age they were the products of simple human attitude and behaviour. That he could perceive the requirements of his age correctly and present them in proper perspective is indeed a great tribute to his genius.

He could not conceive of a city, and very rightly too, existing as an isolated unit totally cut off from its surroundings. He *imagined the city and the desert as an integrated* and interdependent unit. It is very clear from his statement that the cities were not so remorselessly urban in character as the modern cities are. According to Ibn Khaldun, the city and its immediate hinterland comprised four zones: (1) the central built-up area, (2) the pastoral zone, (3) the agricultural belt, and (4) the forested tract arranged either in almost concentric zones of wedge and sector pattern and easily accessible from the central zone where most of the population was concentrated The order of proximity of these zones is not rigidly fixed by Ibn Khaldun. It is liable to change, for instance, if an agricultural tribe inhabits the city, then the members of his group would prefer a location in close proximity to agricultural land, which will thus replace the pastoral zone in order of proximity. The forested tract always occupies the periphery in this rural-urban continuum. Ibn Khaldun envisages a complementary rural urban-association "city in continuous need of fresh supplies

of inhabitants and mercenary soldiers, who must be drawn from the desert and the countryside. It is also in need of the foodstuffs produced by the countryside adjacent to it. The inhabitants of the desert and the countryside on their part come to desire the enjoyment of some of the conveniences offered by the city. They offer their produce or services in exchange for these conveniences."[33] This rural-urban interdependence is borne out even more prominently by modern researches. Hallenbeck expresses this fact as follows: "Because of the interdependence of the urban nucleus and the adjacent countryside, it is impossible ecologically, economically, or politically to divorce the urban from the rural aspect of community or to consider either singly with any possibility of a genuine understanding."[34] To Ibn Khaldun the existence of populous rural suburbs was a prerequisite for the continuity in the life of any town after the collapse of the dynasty that founded it. "The dynasty that has built a certain town may be destroyed. Now the mountainous and flat areas surrounding the city are desert, (the word 'desert' here implies open pasture grounds inhabited by nomadic tribes) that constantly provides for an influx of civilization. This (fact) then will preserve the existence of (the town), and (the town) will continue to live after the dynasty is dead."[35] A city situated in isolation and cut off from its hinterland is doomed to decay and destruction. "It may happen that a town founded (by a dynasty now destroyed) has no opportunity to replenish its civilization (population) by a constant influx of settlers from a desert near the town. In this case, the destruction of the dynasty will leave it unprotected. It cannot be maintained. Its civilization will

(33) Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibid*., p. 212.

(34) W.C. Hallenbeck, *American Urban Communities*, Harper Brothers and Publishers, New York, 1951, p. 99.

(35) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, p. 236.

gradually decay, until its population is dispersed and gone."[36]

THE AGE OF A CITY AND THE STAGES IN ITS DEVELOPMENT

The life of a city depends on the following factors as explained by Ibn Khaldun ; (1) The life of the dynasty which founded the city ; (2) the city and its hinterland and (3) the inherent pull of the city.

The city comes into existence when groups acquire the power of establishing it. It is thus inevitably linked with the formation of a state and the rise of a dynasty. The city is a visible manifestation of a growing civilization. Royal authority and civilization are inseparable like form and matter. The shape of civilization is preserved by the sustaining force of royal authority and crystallises in the form of a city. As it is impossible to imagine a civilization without a dynasty, similarly the existence of civilization is unimaginable without an urban base. The city represents the pulse of the dynasty and the civilization and in turn life in a city is conditioned by the force of civilization. Therefore, the fall of a dynasty and its civilization disturb the city's equilibrium and disrupt the fabric of its life. Thus the life span of a dynasty is also the life span of a city. The ruins of Damascus, Marrakesh and Baghdad during the time of Ibn Khaldun provided positive proof to his general concept and enabled him to generalise thus : "We have found out with regard to civilization that, when a dynasty disintegrates and crumbles, the civilization of the city that is the seat of the ruler of (that dynasty) also crumbles, and in this process often suffers complete ruin. There hardly ever is any delay."[37] Not agreeing with this sweeping generalisation of Ibn Khaldun, one has, however, to admit that this factor operates even to

(36) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, p. 236.

(37) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, p. 297.

this date in the rise and fall of capital cities. Confirmation and general echo of this view are also found in the scholarly study of Ibn Khaldun by Prof. Taha Hussain.[38] However there are other factors that may act as a brake in the process of complete disintegration of the city after the fall of the dynasty. An intimate association of the city with its hinterland is one of them. He refers to the populous suburbs feeding the city proper with population in case of disintegration and thus saving it from decline, He is, however, vague as to the forces that would attract this suburban population when the royal authority is removed.

Lastly, there are certain cities which have a geopolitical pull and thus even after the fall of one dynasty they are being retained as the political centres of the succeeding dynasties and by virtue of this they escape the death, that, in the view of Ibn Khaldun, haunts every capital city—small or great. It is in such cities that the sedentary culture is firmly rooted, urban characteristics are prominent and progress is continuous.[39] Vidal de La Blache strikes a similar note "......In others progress has never entirely ceased. Such regions have never suffered alarming breaks in continuity. For there has been an uninterrupted sequence of related political systems."

The appearance of a city and its culture is not a miraculous phenomenon but an evolutionary process. True to his organismic concept of the evolution of societies, Ibn Khaldun applies it to study the rise and decline of cities. His passage on the stages in the evolution of a city compares favourably with the description of the Lebanon and New Hampshire by E.N. Torbert.[40] The evolutionary stages of a city are described by Ibn Khaldun in the following words:

---

(38) Dr. Taha Hussain, *Ibn Khaldun* (Original in French) tr. into Urdu by Maulana Abdul Salam Nadvi from an Arabic version, Ma'arif Press, Azam-Garh (India), 1940, p. 205.

(39) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, pp. 216-88.

(40) Torbert, E.N., *The Evolution of Lebanon—Geog. Review* : 1935.

"It should be known that when cities are first founded, they have few dwellings and few building materials, such as stones and quicklime, or the things that serve as ornamental coverings for walls..... ...Thus at that time the buildings are built in Bedouin (style), and the materials used for them are perishable.

"Then the civilization of a city grows and its inhabitants increase in number. Now the materials used for (building) increase because of the increase in (available) labour and the increased number of craftsmen. (This process goes on) until (the city) reaches the limit in that respect... ......

"The civilization of the city then recedes, and its inhabitants decrease in number. Thus it entails a decrease in the crafts. As a result, good and solid buildings and the ornamentation of buildings are no longer practised. Then the (available) labour decreases because of the lack of inhabitants. Materials such as stones, marbles and other things, are now being imported scarcely at all, and (building materials) become unavailable. The materials that are in the existing buildings are re-used for building and refinishing. They are transferred from one construction to another,...... (The same materials) continue to be used for one castle after another and for one house after another, until most of it is completely used up. People then return to the Bedouin way of building. They use adobe instead of stone and omit all ornamentation. The architecture of the city reverts to that of villages and hamlets. The mark of the desert shows in it; (the city) then gradually decays and falls into complete ruin, if it is thus destined for it."[41]

This vivid and living description of city evolution reminds one of Griffith Taylor, who has very much improved upon this concept of city evolution and has provided it with

(41) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, pp. 270-71.

a real scientific base. Griffith Taylor believes in a "Cycle of Town Evolution" but doubts if geographers "shall ever be able to analyse and synthesise the data of city development so adequately that we can produce as logical a concept of a Cycle of Town Evolution," as that of the geomorphological cycle. Yet, "We can but try—for one thing we are dealing with the irrational actions of Man, rather than with the inevitable actions of nature. Hence the City Cycle cannot be as clear as the Landscape Cycle."[42]

Ibn Khaldun recognised three major stages in the evolution of cities and society: Youthful, Maturity and Senility. Griffith Taylor retaining these three stages adds the infantile stage,[43] preceding the youthful one. Like Ibn Khaldun he also considers relevant the symbiotic process in the growth of cities and compares the growth of a city with that of a tree. "But it is something like the way a young tree grows. Its trunk and branches increase by a sort of expansion, while quite new characters such as flowers and fruits appear as it reaches maturity."[44] Every great city of today had a small beginning and in his own words: "The giant city, unwieldy and unaesthetic, as it is, has passed through the early stages of pioneer dwelling, village, town, city and metropolis, before it reached its present self-suffocating condition."[45] Griffith Taylor's analysis of the city of Toronto[46] unfolds clearly the variations, from age to age, in the types of buildings and the materials used for their constructions and bears close resemblance with that of Ibn Khaldun cited above. It may further be added that Ibn Khaldun's brilliant analysis of city evolution does contain the germs of the 'Zones and Strata' concept which

(42) G. Taylor: *Ibid.*, p. 7.

(43) *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.

(44) *Ibid.*, p. 73.

(45) *Ibid.*, p. 73

(46) *Ibid.*, pp. 73–76.

was later scientifically nurtured and perfected by Griffith Taylor. This is, however, not to suggest that Prof. Taylor was in any way influenced by the ideas of Ibn Khaldun. It would be dangerous to draw the analogy too far. There is a basic difference in the approach of the two scholars, as there is a wide divergence between the periods of which they are the products. Ibn Khaldun studies the city essentially as a social phenomenon and considers it an outcome of the rise of the dynasty and the state. Griffith Taylor, on the other hand, attempts to unravel all the complex forces and factors,—social, political, economic, cultural and physiographic—which are involved in the inevitable cycle of Urban Evolution. Griffith Taylor, besides describing the general urban characteristics, is also busy evolving a scientific system of classifying cities according to their functional categories and discovering the discernible patterns of city—development on a global basis as conditioned by the physiographic factors. The modern city rests on complex mechanism and is not so simple as to collapse with the fall of the ruling power. It has a sounder economic base and can withstand political upheavals. The modern economic and commercial metropolises overshadow the political capitals if they are not identical. That Ibn Khaldun could not analyse on the lines of Griffith Taylor is conceivable but that he could suggest the line of approach, later perfected by the latter, is indeed creditable.

SIZE, CLASSIFICATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIES

The expansion of the physical size of the city, the growth of its population and the development of its institutions, its prosperity and luxurious manners of life are entirely dependent on the continuous political patronage and protection that could be offered by strong, capable and stable political power.

The size of a city and the monuments it contains are in direct proportion "to the importance of (the various

dynasties). The construction of cities can be achieved only by united effort, great number and the co-operation of workers. When the dynasty is large and far flung, workers are brought together from all regions and their labour is employed in a common effort. Often the work involves the help of machines, which multiply the power and strength needed to carry the loads required in building (unaided) human strength would be insufficient.[47] The size of a city, both physical and in density of population will depend on the continuity of sedentary culture, the age of the city and the size of the kingdom that the city commands. A kingdom of vast dimensions will provide the city with vast and diverse resources, both natural and human, which enhance the prestige and position of the city. A city which has been the political capital for centuries has its built-up area so vastly increased and population so multiplied that it looks an aggregation of urban centres [48]

Ibn Khaldun not only classifies cities on the basis of their size and density of population, but he had also some notion of the functional classification of urban centres. He introduces the idea of the superiority or hierarchy of cities on the basis of crafts.[49] "The activities required for the necessities of life, such as those of tailors, carpenters, and similar occupations exist in every city. But activities required for luxury customs and conditions exist only in cities of highly developed culture ....Among such activities are those of glassblowers, goldsmiths, perfumers, cooks, coppersmiths, biscuit bakers, harisah bakers, weavers of brocade and the like."

"These differential activity patterns in the cities are in accordance with the increase in the customs of sedentary culture and requirements of luxury conditions; there origi-

(47) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, pp. 238-39.

(48) *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

(49) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 302.

nate crafts (especially) for this kind (of luxury requirements). The crafts of this kind will thus exist in a particular city, but not in others.........Public baths........... exist only in densely settled cities of a highly developed civilization.........Therefore, public baths do not exist in medium sized towns."[50] The growth of a city is a slow process of accretion and with the passage of time it not only increases in physical dimensions but also accumulates a variety of functions. Thus the hierarchy in size and functions of a town will depend on the period for which sedentary culture had persisted there. "There is a wide range of variation in the age of cities even within a realm and therefore they differ, among themselves, both in size and functions. "The quality and the number of the crafts depend on the greater or lesser extent of civilization in the cities and on the sedentary culture and luxury they enjoy."[51] Thus there are small-sized towns exhibiting a slight improvement over the nomadic life, the medium-sized towns with just a few luxuries developed and the large-sized ones, existing as expressions of superior civilizations—and products, as it were, the results of accumulated progress,"[52] having concentration of highly developed crafts and scientific pursuits because of the availability of surplus labour, leisure and capital resources.

A scientific definition of the city is yet to be discovered. It has been consistently eluding the urban ecologists. A uniform quantitative system is inapplicable, since the pace of urbanism is not universally uniform What is applicable to one is inapplicable to many others For instance, the quantitative approach to define the cities of the United States does not fit into the urban structure of either Europe or India. It was in sheer desperation that Wilbur C.

(50) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. II, p. 302.

(51) *Ibid.*, 434,

Hallebeck pronounced: "A city is what a city does," and thus he has very much hit the nail on the point. To distinguish one city from another, and to distinguish between the urban and the rural centres, it seems logical that in either case the distinguishing characteristics should be analysed and presented. Ibn Khaldun adopted this technique throughout while discussing the evolution of urban centres.

Distinguishing the urban from the desert civilization, he states: "It has been stated by us before that desert civilization is inferior to urban civilization, because not all the necessities of civilization are to be found among the people of desert. They do possess some agriculture at home, (but) they do not possess (all) the materials that belong to it, most of which depend on crafts. They do not have any carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths, or other (craftsmen whose crafts) would provide them with the necessities required for making a living in agriculture and other things.........likewise, they do not have (coined) money dinars and dirhams. They have the equivalent of it in harvested grain, in animals, and animal products such as milk, wool (of animals), (camels') hair, and hides which the urban population needs and pays the Arabs money for."[53] Making another fine distinction, he says that "the desert people live mainly on agricultural and pastoral occupations which do not take them beyond the subsistence level," and contrary to this "sedentary people means the inhabitants of cities and countries, some of whom adopt the crafts as their way of making a living, while others adopt commerce. They earn more and live more comfortably than Bedouins, because they live on a level beyond the level of bare necessity and their way of making a living corresponds to their wealth."[54]

---

(52) Vidal de la Blache, *Ibid.*, p. 320.

(53) *Muqaddimah*, pp. 303-9.

(54) *Muqaddimah*, Vol. I, 249-50.

Cities are centres of production, trade and commerce. They are the world's market place All kinds of merchandise are found in the market and near it. The wealth of the nation is accumulated in the city and its free circulation in urban regions contributes to the prosperity of the city.[55]" Cities are the great producers of surplus products. "(This surplus) provides for a population far beyond the size and extent of the (actual one) and comes back to the people as profit which they can accumulate. Prosperity thus increases and conditions become favourable"[56] for concentration of wealth.

With its gradual evolution, a new social structure develops in the city. The tribal sense of 'group feeling' which had prevailed in small, closely knit and relatively isolated communities tends to disappear. Individual families live in isolated residences and become strangers to one another. "The highly differentiated demands for specialised goods and skill tend to create specialised groups of artisans and traders. The various classes comprising the city, the rulers, the bureaucracy, the artisans and traders as well as the learned tend to group themselves according to their political and economic interests rather than their blood relations."[57]

The city is a concentration of labour, leisure and wealth. It therefore encouraged development of highly specialized crafts and sciences. Scientific pursuits require both wealth and leisure and the availability of either only in large cities, confines these pursuits to large-sized cities only. "We, at this time, notice that science and scientific

(55) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 236-87.

(56) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p 281.

(57) Muhsin Mahdi, pp. 213-14.

instruction exist in Cairo in Egypt because the civilization of (Egypt) is greatly developed and its sedentary culture has been well established for thousands of years."[58] The development of specialised crafts and instruction in various branches of science attract people from the desert regions, where technical knowledge is non-existent, to cities to seek scientific instruction."[59]

The city culture, having reached the apex, turns senile by the self-effacing processes of urban luxuries They breed laxity of morals and corrupt customs. The vitality of desert life and its integrity and honesty are totally annihilated. The city in its senile stage develops the characteristics of slums and blighted areas of large and modern urban centres. "Immorality, wrong doing, insincerity, and trickery for the purpose of making a living in a proper or improper manner, increase among them.........People are now devoted to lying, gambling, cheating, fraud, theft, perjury and usury."[60]

THE DECAY OF CITIES

"The highest peak of civilization is generally its turning point. Thence begins the step backward—thence commences the decline of the state." Thus summarized Khuda Bux[61] Ibn Khaldun's concept of the decline of civilization after attaining the climax. The decline of the state is sharply reflected in the deteriorating economic conditions of the capital cities. "A city with a large civiliza-

(58) *Muqaddimah*, p. 434.

(59) *Ibid.*, p. 434.

(60) *Ibid.*, p. Vol. II, p. 293.

(61) 'Ibn Khaldun and History of Islamic Civilization,' by Khuda Bux, *Islamic Culture*, (Hyderabad), Vol. I, No.4, Oct. 1927.

tion (population) is characterised by high prices in business and high prices for its need."[62] The prices are sky rocketed during the senile stage of the state, since (owing to its mounting expenditure and shrinking frontiers and resources) the royal authority is compelled to levy customs duties. The progressively declining economic conditions reduce the purchasing capacity of the people and consequently there is general slump in business.[63] Fall of business spreads squalor and poverty. Prosperity deserts the city, leaving behind heaps of slums. Depopulation sets in and ultimately dehumanization completes the process of the ruin of a city.

Wrong choice of locations, either in relation to natural features or cultural ones, may also contribute in the decline of urban centre. A city by the side of a marshy area, or located in isolation, cut off from its natural and population resources, is doomed to ultimate decay.

Ibn Khaldun considers decay of cities and civilization quite natural in the cycle of urban evolution. They have a natural span of life. All the great cities have their origin in humble hamlets and, having reached the climax, they revert to their original status. Cities being an inevitable link in the growth of civilization cannot escape the rigours of the laws of nature. His contentions are substantially supported by the modern researches of Griffith Taylor. Even Vidal de la Blache echoes the voice of Ibn Khaldun while describing the evolution of civilization. "Even in some countries of advanced civilization a mode of life once achieved is a closed circle.........The same old habits persist without perceptible change. So that after having shown signs of an evolution capable of reaching a stage of relative perfection, there comes a certain impotence, an incapacity

---

(62) *Muqaddimah, Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 292.

(63) Abdul Quader, M.

to advance farther in the same direction or to start off in any other.........A time comes when all effort ceases..................A period of stagnation follows that of progress........."[64] and finally the chain of progress is broken.

CONCLUSION

Ibn Khaldun was the first among the ancient and medieval scholars to have made a coherent and scientific study of cities. Prior to him Aristotle also discussed the growth and functions of cities in his 'Politics,'[65] but his cities are meant only for "those who are members of the state and form part of it." The greatness and vitality of his city rest on these elite and his city is not to be confounded with "a city which produces numerous artisans and few soldiers" Ignorant of the ecological processes, Aristotle introduces rigid zoning of functional areas, completely segregating one from the other, in order to create the most beautiful city. He is so busy combining magnitude with good order that he signally fails to take into account the social and economic forces that operate so powerfully in the growth of cities. His account of the growth and functions of cities lacks coherence and is far from being scientific. Ibn Khaldun, on the other hand, fully appreciated the social basis and the economic character of the urban order and therefore paid considerable attention to observe the character and development of these features in the urban set-up. To him the city was the concrete manifestation of the rising level of human civilization. In the constantly shifting scenes of city development he tried to observe the general laws and principles operating upon the growth and development of the city structure. He fully "recognised the superiority

(64) Vidal De La Blache: (Tr.) *Human Geography*, pp 325–26, (Constable).

(65) Aristotle Vol. II, *Great Books of the Western World*, series No. 9, pp. 530–535. (Politics: Book VII, Chapters 4 and 11). Published by Encyclopaedia Britannica—Chicago, 1952.

of sedentary culture, the goal of all of man's efforts to become civilized." He equally appreciated the urban characteristics, the close rural-urban relationship and the impact of environmental factors on city growth. He, however, had only dim apprehension of the ecological patterns of a city. This may partly be due to the fact that during the age of Ibn Khaldun the functional areas, excepting the royal palaces, were not well differentiated and defined and therefore they did not possess sharply distinguishing features to invite the attention of the author of the *Prolegomena*, and partly due to the fact that he studied the cities as an inevitable stage in the cycle of civilization. He was, therefore, in search of urban synthesis and thus was not interested in dissecting individual cities. Moreover, the quantitative methods now developed to investigate the complicated urban patterns were beyond the intellectual resources of Ibn Khaldun. It is not therefore expected of him even to suggest an attempt on the modern lines. In spite of this handicap, he did suggest an approach to the study of cities on the lines of Griffith Taylor, and it was no mean achievement considering the age when the *Prolegomena* was written. That he had many failures, it has to be admitted. Those were the failures not of his intellect, observation and appreciation, but of the age of which he was the product. Yet in the *Muqaddimah* he re-evaluates in a systematic way practically every single individual manifestation of a great and highly developed civilization. The *Muqaddimah* accomplishes this, both comprehensively and in detail, in the light of one fundamental and sound insight, namely, by considering everything as a function of man and human social organization. He was indeed a man with a great mind who combined action with thought, a man of vision and penetrating intellect who always looked, ahead of his age.

THE IMPACT OF THE WEST ON THE CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

—E. FARAH*

THE impact of the west on the evolution of conflicting ideologies in the Arab World during the past century and particularly in the interim of the first and second World Wars has been determinative if not decisive. Although the impact has been linked historically with the cultural re-awakening of the Arab World, it revealed itself most intriguingly and paradoxically in the political relations of the leading European states, France and Britain, with the Arab World.

There were three important developments in the nineteenth century of relevance to the course and pattern of Western involvement in the Arab World: the rise of a modern state in Egypt inspired by Western techniques and ideals as represented by revolutionary France; the emergence of a puritanical Muslim revivalist ideology in the Arabian peninsula which pointed out the feasibility of a general Islamic awakening; and the eruption of sectarian warfare in Lebanon and Syria which focused attention on the rivalistic interests and aims of the two European powers and paved the way for the rise of particular and conflicting ideologies.[1] These developments set the stage for the pattern pursued by the West in its dealings with the Arab World, defined broadly as one of challenge and response.

---

* Dr. Caeser E. Farah, Ph. D. (Princeton University), Professor of History & Arabic, Portland State College, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A.

(1) For a thorough review of this problem see Farah, C. E., *Problems of the Ottoman Administration in the Lebanon, 1840–1861*, Princeton University, Ph. D. dissertation, 1957.

In the nineteenth century the Europe of liberalism and nationalism provided the impulses for an intellectual fermentation and a subsequent cultural and political awakening which recognized the need for reform. More specifically, the West established educational institutions that became instrumental in the Arab rediscovery of a glorious past; it opened up avenues of travel to European centres of intense nationalistic and liberal thinking where receptive Arab minds were exposed to revolutionary ideologies based thereon, and it introduced modern media of communication, such as the press, which gave rise to scores of publications and journals that served as vehicles for diffusing the rediscovered wealth and eloquence of classical Arabic literature and the Arabic language, as a testimony of supreme Arab achievement in forlorn times.[2] Aroused intellectual curiosity opened the gates to highly charged western concepts[3] which eventually supplied the impetus for developing a nationalistic conscience that found expression in "Arabism" (*al-'Urubah*).

During this formative stage, ideological fermentation was rife and rebellious against traditional ideals; for although enlightening, the intellectual awakening proved to be diversifying and at times confusing. Yet as ideas began to take on socio-political forms, two definite trends emerged: a nationalistic secular movement sired by Western ideals and purposing the revitalization of the Arab World by combining nationalism and constitutionalism, reformism and revolutionary activism and a non-secular

(2) Arab Office, *The Arab World and the Arab League* (ed. S. C. Wadi), 1951, p. 4

(3) More specifically. such concepts, as "fatherland," "nation," "nationalism," "equality," "natural rights," "liberalism" "democracy" sezied upon as symbols of awakening; for details consult Khuri, Ra'id *al-Fikr al-Arabi al-Hadith*, Beirut, 1943, pp. 125 *seq*.

Islamic revivalist movement aiming at preserving the solidarity of the Muslim World under the Ottoman caliphal authority in the face of an aggressive West.[4]

Three groups affected by western knowledge were instrumental in the crystallization of these trends: a "Westernized" group that embraced fully and unreservedly the ideals of the West and spearheaded western policy interests in the Arab World; a "middle-of-the-road" group that adapted western ideals to its Arabic heritage, rendering it activistic and nationalistic and that steered an independent course politically, and finally a "rejectionist" non-secular group brandishing the sword of revitalized Islamism to dam the tide of western ideas and their impact on the thinking of Arabs exposed to them.[5]

The course of the two trends evolving under stimuli derived from the West became more clearly distinguished in the opening decade of the twentieth century under the impact of the pan-Turanian policy of the Young Turks when the Arab secularists demanded greater political freedom, while the Islamists argued for solidarity with the Ottomans As the dust on the fruitless struggle settled at the outbreak of World War I, Arab thinkers found themselves in two conflicting camps: pan-Islamism and pan-Arab nationalism. Adherents of the former were strong in Egypt; of the latter in Lebanon and Syria.

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani has been regarded as the foremost formulator of the pan-Islamic ideology in modern times, conceived by him as an essentially defensive weapon against the encroachment by Western powers on Islamic

---

(4) For a broader analysis see Nuseibeh, H. Z., *The Ideas of Arab Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, 1956.

(5) A leading advocate of this position in recent years is 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam; for a detached presentation of his views see his *al-Risalah Al-Khalidah*, Cairo, 1947 edition.

lands. In Egypt al-Afghani won over to his thinking such powerful thinkers as Muhammad 'Abduh and the latter's Syrian student, Muhammad Rashid Rida, plus many other disciples of "al-Urwah al-Wuthqa."[6]

Egyptian thinkers seized upon pan-Islamism as a weapon for combating British colonialism there. An alliance thereby was struck up with "Egyptianism," a movement that had been striving towards the same goal ever since Ahmad 'Arabi had uttered the cry "Egypt for the Egyptians."[7] Egyptianism was strictly a particular ideology invoked by the British impact and struggling within the framework of Islamism and Ottomanism to free Egypt from British control.

Passionately involved in their special problem, Egyptian thinkers were unconcerned with the problem of the Arab nationalists in Syria who similarly employed their ideology as a weapon for ridding themselves of another foreign rule, the Ottoman. The Arab nationalists, led mostly by Christians but soon joined by Muslims[8] who did not share the Egyptian Muslim sense of kinship with the Ottoman state, and having despaired of obtaining administrative reforms, began soliciting support from Europe. As a matter of fact the

(6) These include such leading literary figures as 'Abdallah al-Nadim, Qasim Amin, Waliy al-Din Yakan and Mustafa al-Manfaluti; for other partisans of pan-Islamism see Rida, M. R., *Tarikh al-Ustadh al-Imam al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh.* Cairo; al-Manar, 1931, vol. II, pp. 339 *seq.*

(7) On November 4, 1879, a group of army officers led by Arabi and supported by al-Afghani founded the Nationalist Party, first of its kind in Egypt, to fight the mounting British influence. See 'Arabi, A., *Kashf al-Sitar an Sirr al-Asrar fi al-Nahdah al-Misriyah al-Mashhurah bi al-Thawrah al-Arabiyah*, Cairo, Vol. I, p. 16.

(8) It was towards the end of the nineteenth century when Muslim Arabs, largely owing to the preachings of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, began to assume a prominent role in the Arab nationalist movement; see an article by Muhammad Kurd 'Ali in *Al-Hilal*. April, 1939 issue, p. 24.

first Arab nationalist conference held in 1913 was convened in Paris.[9] When the demands formulated at this conference and submitted to the Porte came to naught, Arab intellectuals and officers went underground in their secret societies and bided their time for action.

With the outbreak of the War, prodded by excesses committed by Ottoman military authorities in the Syrian provinces, the nationalists rallied under the banner of revolt unfolded by Sharif Husayan of Mecca who agreed to support the allied war effort in return for British recognition of full independence and unity for all Arab states north of the Sinai Peninsula. Yet when the time for accounting arrived the Arab leaders of the nationalist revolt discovered to their chagrin that while they consented to enter the war on certain terms, their allies in the Sykes-Picot agreement already had decided on the division of their lands into French and British controlled territories. A fruitless effort was made at the Paris Peace Conference to secure the fulfilment of the allied pledge and in 1920, "the year of catastrophe" at San Remo, Britain and France won legal recognition for a political *a priori* under the guise of the mandate.

The years 1920–1948 of the mandate are important in that they revealed fully the political facet of the Western impact, when the West shifted, in the eyes of Arab idealists, from the role of inspirer and guide to that of a despotic aggressor. Whereas hitherto the impact was mostly tacit, inspiring and largely cultural, henceforth it becomes open and aggressive, aiming at the realization of political ends. To achieve such ends, the West resorted to the tactics of divide and rule. While Ottoman role may have been barren in cultural values and lacking in creative impulses, it had not attempt-

(9) Khatib, Muhibb al-Din al-. *al-Mu'tammar al-Arabi al-Awwal*, Cairo, 1913, p. 19.

-ed to destroy the Arabism of such areas as Lebanon and Syria.[10] Under the Ottomans the Arab provinces in West Asia enjoyed administrative unity, but as "...the dust on World War I settled in the Arab World, there arose from the confusion of these eventful early post-War years ten political entities under diverse foreign administration in the area whose people expected to emerge independent and unified."[11] With the process of dismemberment approaching its end, some twenty-five separate political entities came into existence on Arab soil under French, British, Spanish and Italian installed regimes.[12] With Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Lebanon already tucked under her belt, France in 1920 proceeded to uproot the shortlived Arab kingdom in Syria of Faysal, the son of Husayn; Britain consolidated her hold in Iraq, carved Transjordan out of Syria and rewarded Abdallah with its throne, and then looked on tacitly while the Zionist ideology began to implant itself feverishly in Palestine. Armed uprisings in protest against the peace settlement were the reaction of the thwarted Arab nationalists in Syria, Palestine and Iraq.[13]

It is while seeking to broaden the base of their political control that the mandatory powers, and especially France, resorted to the policy of encouraging and supporting a new form of *shu'ubiyah*, or particular ideologies based on sectarian distinctiveness, in order to distract from the pan-Arab ideology of the nationalists. Yet in the debris of shattered expectations and reverses, the nationa-

---

(10) Atiyah, Edward, *The Arabs*, Edinburgh; Penguin 1955. pp. 42. *seq*.

(11) Sayegh, Fayez A., *Arab Unity*, New York: Evin-Adair, 1958, p. 36.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 42.

(13) Antonius, George, *The Arab Awakening*, New York; Putnam 1946, p. 312.

lists acquired a clearer notion of their basic ideals and goals, namely to undo dismemberment and work for unification and independence.

The foundation for the rising edifice of *shu'ubiyah* had already been excavated under Ottoman role: in the autonomomons existence of sectarian millets and in the close ties certian millets enjoyed under the capitulatory system with European powers. Consequently, particular ideologies were confined almost exclusively to the groups in certain localities that had enjoyed extensive contacts with Western nations.[14]

As movements based on distinguishing ideologies developed and expanded in the period under consideration, they tended to fall into three broad categories: the strictly local movements[15] such as "Phoenicianism" in Lebanon and "Pharaonism" in Egypt; regional movements[16] such as Greater Syrian nationalism, and pan movements[17] such as pan-Arab nationalism and pan-Islamism. The champions of these particular ideologies consisted of organized political parties and societies as well as non-affiliated intellectual groups. France seems to have specialized in fostering local movements, while Britain tended more often than not to support the regional and pan movements. The strategy of both aimted at preoccupying the newly created political

(14) For details consult Sharrarah, 'Abd al-Latif, *Fi al-Qawmiyah al-Arabiyah*, Beirut: Qalfat, 1957, p. 73.

(15) Among the local movements may be listed "Kurdism" and "Assyrianism" in Iraq; "Alawaytism" and "Druzism" in Syria; Zionism in Palestine, and "Berberism" in north Africa.

(16) These would embrace the Greater Syria and the Fertile Crescent Unity schemes of the Hashimite monarchs 'Abdallah and Faysal II, the Nile Valley unity idea, and unity of the Maghrib movement.

(17) Also International Communism and pan-Mediterraneanism.

units with problems and grievances peculiar to them and to drive wedges between the units.[18] The weapons of France in cultivating ideological separatism were religious and educational institutions already at work in areas such as Lebanon and Algeria ; the weapon used by Britain was the manipulation of rival political trends within and without the Arab states under her jurisdiction.

In the Lebanon, France launched her mandate with a proclamation of strong ties and friendship with the Catholic communities, namely, the Maronite, which she singled out for special consideration over many others in recognition of their traditional support for French interests in the area and of their efforts in bringing about the mandate.[19] In the schools administered by official and non-official French organizations, young Christians began to learn that they were Phoenicians, not Arabs. A separative ideology

(18) Husri, K. S. al-, *Dife an al-Urubah*, Beirut; Dar al-Ilm, 1957. p. 8.

(19) During World War the Maronite Patriarch Huwayk supported by leading Maronite spokesmen in Lebanon, Egypt, Paris, the United States and Brazil, such as Iskandar 'Ammun Shukri Ghanim, Naeim Mukarzal and others, called for French support' to protect the "Lebanese nation." While the King-Crane Commission in 1919 was seeking out the views of the Arabs for the League of Nations, Huwayk was in Paris pressuring the government for a French mandate and the Maronites in Lebanon were telling the commission that they wanted an independent Lebanon under French protection. The Maronites were never enthusiastic about the Arab revolt and grew exceedingly suspicious when following his election to the throne of Syria, Faysal did not acknowledge an independent Lebanon outside Syria. French military authorities who opposed the British placing of Faysal on the throne of Syria encouraged Maronite resistance and aroused their fear by alleging that the Bedouin followers of Faysal would institute a reactionary government based on Islamic law in the Lebanon. Consult Farie, N. A., *'Hatha al-'Alam al'Arabi* Beirut, 1953, pp. 91 *seq.*; al-Husri, S. K., *Yawm Maysalun*, Beirut, 1947; Sayigh, A., *Lubnan al-Ta'ifi*, Beirut : Dar al-Sira al-Fikri, 1955, pp. 137, 139, 141, 143.

based on Phoenicianism and accentuating sectarian differences was cultivated assiduously with the aim of cementing loyalty ties with France.[20] Phoenicianism as the ideology of Lebanon received strong support in the preachings of Catholic religious orders, in numerous publications and journals sponsored by them, and in the new archaeological discoveries widely publicized.

The vocal organ of Phoenicianism in the Lebanon has been the Maronite dominated *al-kata'ib* (Falange), a scout-like organization that came into existence at the instigation of French authorities in 1936. Essentially a defensive organization, it seems to lack a long range creed or purpose as attested by its constitution and by a membership fluctuating with the crises involving it.[21] Although it has predicated its existence on the notion that a distinctive Lebanese nation has existed from Phoenician days, Article 1 of its constitution wherein the founders of the Kata'ib pledge "......to strive constantly to create a Lebanese nation" does not bear out their contention.[22]

The Kata'ib was but one of numerous political organizations upholding conflicting ideological beliefs allowed to thrive on Lebanese soil by French authorities. In the late 1930's and early 1940's almost every sect in the Lebanon, Christian and Muslim, had organized societies and parties embodying a particular ideology.[23] The *Kashshaf*

(20) Husri, S. K. al-, *Muhadarat fi Nushu al-Fikrah al-Qawmiyah*, Beirut : Dar al-Ilm, 1956, p. 176.

(21) Bayhum, M. J., *al-Urubah wa Al-Shu'ubiyat al-Hadithah*, Beirut : Kashshaf, 1957, pp. 172–73.

(22) Qubruai, A., *Nahnu wa Lubnan*, Beirut, 1954, pp. 83–85.

(23) For the Orthodox Christians : "The Order of Ghassan," founded in 1943; for Shi'i Muslims : *al-Tala-i* of Rashid Baydun and *al-Nahdah* of Ahmad al-Asad, and for Sunni Muslim groups : *Ubbad al-Rahman* and *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin;* for additional details see Sayigh, A., *op-cit.*, p. 151. French authorities had nurtured two other particular ideologies centred on "Lebancism" or "Phoenicianism" '*al-Nahdah al-Lubnaniyah* and *al-Sibagah al-*

and its successor in 1937, the *Najjadah*, both Muslim organizations, rejected the theory that Lebanon was Phoenician and argued strongly that it was an Arab country; hence the reason why it should unite with Syria. Many Christians, including Maronites, tended to reject Phoenicianism in favour of Syrian nationalism and Arab nationalism.[24]

Although French policy on the whole favoured the evolution of local ideologies, it did not hinder the rise of regional ideologies as well, namely "Mediterraneanism" and geographical Syrian nationalism. The former was an offshoot of Phoenicianism and largely an intellectual expression asserting that Lebanon and France, buing Mediterranean basin countries, enjoy a basic cultural unity rooted in history, and hence, Lebanon should turn to France rather than to Syria, the repository of lingering Arab nationalism.[25] The latter owed its inception to archaeological findings which pointed to pre-Arabo-Islamic civilizations that thrived in close affinity on Syrian soil in its geographical expression. These findings were publicized widely in the speeches and writings of such Frenchmen as the Jesuit Henry Lammens,

---

Lubnaniyah; both died out, however, before attaining maturity. Only the parliamentary election party, *al-Kutlah Al-Wataniyah* and *Al-Kata'ib* have managed to survive with pro-France policies.

(24) We find evidence of this in the writings of eminent literary figures such as Butrus Bustani, Amin al-Rayhani, May Ziadah, Jubran Khalil Jubran, Nadra Mutran, Fu'ad Azmun, Iliya abu-Madi, Mikha'il Nuaymah and others, all of whom favoured a broader nationalism in which Lebanon would have a leading role (Qubrusi, *op. cit.*, p, 49 seq). This would lend force to the assertion that prior to the French mandate ideological particularism was not an expression of sectarian distinctiveness. Sayigh, A., *op. cit.*, p. 147.

(25) The leading Lebanese spokesmen of the movement were Charles Karam, Hector Khalat; Sa'id Aql and Yusuf al-Sawda; their vocal publication was *Al-Majallah al-Lubnaniayh* established in 1919. Some of them played a leading role at the 1935 conference held in Monoco partisans of "Mediterraneanism"; see Sayigh A., *al-Fikrah al-Arabiyah fi Misr*, Beirut al-Gharib, 1959.

who were among the first to stress the historical cultural unity of Syria antedating the Arab era.

The partisans of this regional ideology were organized into the Syrian Nationalist Party formally in 1937 under the leadership of Antun Sa'di, which rejected strongly the ideological contentions of the adherents of Phoenicianism and of Arab nationalism. With the motto "Syria for the Syrians and the Syrians constitute a single nation," the party evolved the most elaborate and highly articulated ideology known to any organization in the Arab World. It was the first party based on a set of well-defined ideals a compelling purpose. In its philosophy and organizational structure it betrayed the influence of the German romanticists, Hegel and Fichte, and the Nazi ideology.[26] It rejected sectarianism as the basis of ideological conception and as a criterion of nationhood, denounced the sectarian ideologies flourishing in the Lebanon and opposed the notion that the Syrians formed an Arab nation.[27] The party struggled to eliminate French domination as the first step towards creating a new political and social order in Syria. Although it gained a sizeable adherence immediately following World War II, its opposition to Arab nationalism proved to be its nemesis and its executioners were the Phoenician nationalists.[28]

---

(26) Sa'di was particularly impressed by their emphasis on geographical unity and national cohesion. In the insignia, other heraldic trappings, and uniforms of the militia the Nazi influence is obvious. For the constitution of the party see *Dastur al-Hizb al-Suri al-Qawmi al-Ijtima'i wa Qawaninihi*, Beirut, 1955. For the influence of Fichte and Hegel consult Sharrah, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

(27) The attitude of Sa'di towards Arab nationalism changed following his return from exile in 1947; recognizing the mounting strength of this ideology, he maintained that his ideology represented true Arabism having served as "the front of the Arab World..its sword..and its shield" (cited in *Al-Ahzab al-Siyasiyah fi Suriya*, Damascus: al-Ruwad, 1954, p. 97).

(28) Its advocates were among those who conducted the trial and execution of Sa'di; see Lebanon. *Qadiyyat al-Hizb al-Qawmi*, Beirut: Ministry of Information, 1949.

In the ideological conflict it appears that the French were operating on two fronts: on the one hand they encouraged the particular ideologies of the Christian sects to oppose those of the Muslim sects, and on the other hand they permitted the existence of regional ideologies to block the path of the Arab nationalist ideology.[29]

The attitude of France towards the broader ideologies became noticeably relaxed as World War II approached. Societies and organizations supporting the Arab nationalist ideology were allowed to flourish, mainly on the premises of the American University of Beirut, the traditional breeding ground of Arab nationalism.[30] Among the leading Lebanese parties advocating such in ideology were "Isbat al-'Amal al-Qawmi"[31] nd "Hizb al-Niba' al-Qawmi."[32] Both rejected sectarian ideologies and insisted on co-operation with other Arab countries to eliminate foreign domination.

(29) For instance, French Government officials were encouraging the president of the Syro-Lebanese Society in Paris, Shukri Ghanim—whose friendship for France was widely known—to support the ideology of Syrian nationalism; while another friend, Edward al-Dahdah, was asked to work on tying Syrian nationalism to France. Again in 1938 France attempted to win over Syrian nationalism to her side by attempting to unite Syria and Iraq, although Iraq was under British jurisdiction, by supporting the advocates of this scheme; George Samne', Haykal Haykal and Khayrallah Khayralla; See Sayigh, A. *Al-Fikrah*, op. cit., p. 150.

(30) There were al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa, al-Nadi al-Thaqafi al-Arabi and since 1954, "Mu'tamar al-Khirrijin al-Da'im li Qadaya al-Watan al-'Arabi" organised by the alumni association of the university under Emile Bustani. See Mu'tamar al-Khirrijin, *Ma Huwa Mu'tamar al-Khirrijin al-Da'im li Qadaya al-Watan al-'Arabi*, Beirut: no date, pp. 3 *seq*.

(31) It had its inception in the Arab Conference of 1933 which aimed at finding ways to unify the course of Arab nationalism and to eliminate foreign domination.

(32) Organised in 1944-45 on the premise that Lebanon constitutes an Arab nation.

That the grip of particular ideologies should begin to lessen was inevitable in the growing demand of Arab nationalists everywhere for independence and unity and in the increasing sympathetic attitude of Great Britain. From 1941 onwards Britain, long weary of the machinations of her ally in the Fertile Crescent area, decided the time had come to eliminate France officially from the Lebanese and Syrian scene. From the middle of the nineteenth century on Britain had tended to support Arabism and Islamism in Syria in order to counter the close support of France for the Catholic sects. With the outbreak of World War II Britain actively committed herself to Arab unification schemes to eliminate the enticement of Nazi propaganda and sympathy among the Arabs. The showdown came in 1943 when Britain backed the candidates of the Constitutional Election Party in Lebanon against the candidates of the National Election Party supported by France. The British-backed candidates won but were deposed by the French authorities. In the revolution that ensued Lebanon gained her independence and the British-supported Bisharah al-Khuri was re-instituted as President of the republic. With his inclinations to the Arab nationalist ideology, Lebanon began to rediscover her Arab orientation at the expense of the particular ideologies.

The efforts of France to nurture ideological separatism in Syria were crowned with the least success despite her use of force on more than one occasion to suppress Arab nationalist revolts. Scores of Syrian Arab nationalists, organizations and societies had been active in Syria prior to the mandate. Although a dent was made among certain groups, namely, the Westernized who aped French culture and sought independence in the name of the principles of the French Revolution,[33] and although France sought to carve up Syria ideologically as well as physically, she was

(33) Maktab al-Ba'th al-'Arabi *Dhikra Maysalun*, Beirut, 1954, p. 5.

not able to uproot the Arab nationalist ideology from the minds of the Syrians.[34] The Lebanon may have enjoyed the reputation of having sired intellectually the Arab nationalist ideology, but it was in Syria that its fires continued to burn in spite of all efforts to extinguish them. In Aleppo, the 'Alwite country, Jabal al-Druz and Damascus resistance remained too strong to be overcome.[35]

The urge to assert the ideals of Arab nationalism during the period of the mandate is evident in the writings of its outstanding advocates, such as Sati' al-Husri, its foremost ideological formulator. It can be seen also in the constitutions of almost all the political parties that sprung into existence during the two decades, 1930 to 1950, which call for constant struggle to obtain independence from foreign domination and unity.

---

(34) That the Arab nationalist ideology was firmly implanted in the thinking of Syrians is attested to in the discourses of the French Victor Berard in the French Senate, April 6, 1921, as cited by Rabbath, Edmond in his *Unite Syrienne et devenir Arabe*, Paris, 1937, p. 41.

(35) When Faysal was ousted from Damascus following the Battle of Maysalun in 1920, the French carved up Syria into four statelets: Aleppo, Damascus, the 'Alawite country and Jabal al-Druz. Revolts beset the 'Alawite country, 1919–21, under Salih and al-Murshid even though the French authorities there had been attempting to persuade the 'Alawites that they were descendants of the Crusaders, hence Christians, before being forced into Islam. Missionary schools were enlisted in efforts to cultivate a separate ideology based on this notion, and rebellious leaders were given money and arms (al-Husri, S. K., *al-Urubah Awwalan*, Beirut: Dar al-Ilm, 1955, pp. 21–22). The French had set up Mur'i Pasha as President of Aleppo State (1920–25). When the French Resident felt the time had come to give legal basis to the state, a general election was held; but the first order of business of the assembly was to vote for union with Damascus (*Ibid.*, p. 18). In 1925 Sultan Pasha al-Atrash of Jabal al-Druz launched a revolt against the French which quickly spread into other parts of Syria and culminated in the French bombardment of Damascus.

The first to be organized formally under the mandate was "'Usbat al-'Amal al-Qawmi"[36] (League of National Action) with the dual purpose of working for independence and for complete unity with other Arab countries. The party attacked the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936 on the ground that it aimed at isolating Syria from the goals of the Arab nationalist ideology.

All other political parties established subsequently staked their existence on the triumph of the Arab nationalist ideology. "Ḥizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabi"[37] came into existence in 1940 to resist the French occupation and to work for "the resurrection of the Arab nation."[38] The party worked consistently for unification schemes, i.e. the proposed unification of Syria and Iraq in 1949, and succeeded finally in bringing about the union of Egypt and Syria in 1958. Unlike other parties speaking for Arab nationalism, the Ba'th worked for its goals outside Syria as well and established branches in most of the Arab countries, as its principles and aims embodied fully the precepts of the Arab nationalist ideology.[39] In many respects it was the first organized party in the Arab World predicating its existence on serving the ends of the pan-Arab ideology. Its constitution rests on the Western inspired precepts of national-

(36) Founded in 1933 by Ahmad al-Sharbati. For its constitutional provisions consult *al-Ahzab*,. pp. 140–42

(37) "The Arab Resurrectionist Party," becoming "The Arab Resurrectionist Socialist Party" in 1953 with the merger of Akram al-Hawrani's socialist party with Michelle 'Aflaq's al-Ba'th.

(38) Hizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabi al-Ishtiraki, *Bayan li al-Sha'b* (al-Urdun) February 1956, p. 9.

(39) Namely, resistance to Western occupation of Arab lands until complete independence and unity were achieved ; non-involvement in Western-sponsored alliances and pacts ; positive neutrality, and the social reform of Arab society.

ism, socialism and revolutionary action.[40] Its leadership derived from the middle-of-the-road group whose ideology represents the adaptation of the Western principle of activism to the latent dynamism of Arabism. Armed with a pan-Arab ideology, the Ba'th could not avoid conflict with other pan-ideologies such as International Communism, as attested by its experiences in Iraq with Communism. To the Ba'th, Communism is the second deadliest enemy of the Arab nationalist ideology next to Western imperialism and its offshoot, Zionism.[41]

In the British dominated Arab countries,[42] coflicting ideologies were less conspicuous. In Iraq, for instance, only on two major occasions did sectarian ideological conflicts become manifest: when the British put down the revolt of the Iraqis with the assistance of the Assyrian minorities in 1933 and when the Sulaymaniyah Kurda were incited to revolt three years earlier against Faysal's government in Baghdad.[43]

Unlike Syria, all political parties existing in Iraq during the first decade of the mandate were not concerned with the Arab nationalist ideology, being involved almost exclusively in their narrow internal conflict. The Hashimite monarchs did not tolerate or encourage the existence of non-conforming ideologies. And it was not until the pro-

(40) 'Aflaq, M. *Hawl al-Qawmiyah wa al-Ishtirakiyah*, [Damascus], 1957, p. 50; for full understanding of what the Ba'th stands for see Hizb al-Ba'th al-Arabi al-Ishtiraki. Al-Maktab al-Thaqafi, *Sharh Dustur Hizb al-Ba'th al-Arabi al-Ishtiraki*, (Hoover Institute Photostatic copy).

(41) Hizb al-Ba'th, *Tajribatuna fi al-'Iraq ma'a al-Shuyu'iyah*, (Damascus), 1959.

(42) Namely, Iraq, Transjordan, Palestine and Egypt.

(43) The Assyrians went so far as to request a separate independent state in Iraq from the League of Nations. See League of Nations, *Minutes of the Permanent Mandates Commission*, Session of June 9th to June 27th, 1931, p. 135.

clamation from the throne on December 1, 1945, permitting the establishment of political parties, that they began to appear *en force*.[44] It is interesting to note that almost all of them were oriented towards the Arab nationalist ideology in declaring Iraq a part of the Arab nation and by pledging close ties with Arab states seeking independence, self-realisation and unity.[45]

Undoubtedly this was a result of the renewed efforts of the Hashimites to bring about the fulfilment of their father Husyan's goal of Arab unity. The time seemed most favourable, for Britain, hard pressed by the war effort, had begun to concede to the Arab nationalist demands, particularly following the Nazi-supported revolt of Rashid 'Ali al-Gaylani in Iraq. Another reason was to eliminate French control from Syria and Lebanon where the French had gone over to the Vichy government. With the inevitability of military operations against the Vichy French in Syria, it became desirable for the British to rally the support of the Arab nationalists in Syria.

First to respond to British overture was Amir 'Abdallah of Transjordan, who in a memorandum to Anthony Eden dated July 2, 1941, requested support for bringing about the political and economic unity of Greater Syria.[46] The other Arab monarchs in Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt did not respond until after the British victory at al-'Alamayn and Eden's second announcement in behalf of Arab unity

(44) Among them may be listed: "Hizb al-Ahrar," "Hizb al-Watani al-Dimuqrati," "Hizb al-Istiqlal," "Hizb al-Ittihad al-Watani," "Hizb al-Islah," "Hizb al-Ittihad al-Dusturi" and "Hizb al-Ummah al-Ishtiraki."

(45) See pertinent constitutional provisions as cited by Sayigh, A., *al-Fikrah*......pp. 168–69.

(46) For details consult Jordan, Ministry of Information, *al-Kitab al-Abyad al-Urdun (Watha'iq 'an Suriya al-Kubra)* 'Amman, 1947, pp. 33–35.

on February 24, 1945. Egypt, led by its prime minister Nahhas Pasha, responded with alacrity, thereby stealing a march on other rivals for Arab nationalist leadership, when she set in motion the negotiations and conferences that culminated in the formal establishment of the League of Arab States. With one big leap, Egypt thus emerges from her local nationalism to the leadership of Arab nationalism.

For long Egypt, the most important of the Arab states, had remained outside the stream of the pan-Arab ideology, as she had regarded Egyptianism supported by Islamism a more powerful weapon to use against the British in the protracted battle for independence. Since the turn of the century political parties and leading personalities had been absorbed almost exclusively with the ideology of Islamo-Egyptianism.[47] The National Party of Mustafa Kamil rallied its support around the slogan : Egypt is first ! Egypt for the Egyptians ! Egyptians are Muslims.[48] His successor Muhammad Farid, in preaching Islamic solidarity with the Ottoman state, denounced the nascent Arab nationalist ideology of the Syrians as a British scheme to perpetuate British control over Egypt.[49] The Ottoman authorities accepted Egyptianism as the means for isolating Egypt from the Syrian Arab provinces, because if Egypt should covet the caliphate, she might succeed in rallying these provinces under her leadership.

The Egyptianism of the Muslims found support in the Pharoanism of the Christian Copts, a rather unusual marriage of convenience when the situation is contrasted to

(47) This is evident in the preaching of political parties established between 1907 and 1909, i. e. "al-Hizb al-Watani al-Hurr," which reflected their unconcern with the Arab nationalist ideology ; see Sayigh, A., *al-Fikrah*..........p. 60.

(48) *Ibid.*, p. 49 *seq.*

(49) Reference is made here to Muhammad Rashid Rida's "Jam'iyat al-Ittihad al-'Arabi ;" see *al-'Alam*, Muharram 8, 1329 a. h. (January 1911) No. 205.

that existing in Lebanon where the ideological aims of the Christians and Muslims conflicted. The ideology of Pharaonism asserted that Egyptians are not Arabs but descendants of Pharaonic ancestors antedating the Arabo-Islamic era. The Syrian communities in Egypt who tended to preach the ideology of Arab nationalism were regarded as intruders and subversive in that they sought to weaken Egyptianism as tools of British policy[50]

The discovery in 1920 of Tut 'Ankh Amon's grave confirmed the Pharaonic trend in Egyptian natio nalism.[51] The British encouraged Pharaonism in order to divert Egyptian nationalist thinking away from pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism.[52] The popular sentiment engendered by the findings was converted to advantage by the westernized Egyptian secularists who played up the Pharaonic ties of modern Egyptians, alleging that Pharaonism makes no distinction between Muslim and Copt and should not be a criterion of nationalism.[53] To the Copts Egyptianism was

---

(50) They were primarily refugees from Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid's tyranny, having found their new homes in Egypt between 1880 and 1914; being largely Christian, the Ottoman oriented Islamism of the Egyptians was suspect to them; moreover, secular Arab nationalism in their eyes was the weapon to use against the Ottomans if only they could convert Egyptian thinkers to the cause. See Hourani, A., *Minorities in the Arab World*, Oxford: University Press, 1947, p. 31; Tarbin, A., *al-Wahdah al-'Arabiyah bayn 1916–1945*, Cairo · Arab League, 1959, pp. 187–88.

(51) Earliest efforts to rediscover the Pharaonic past were made in the first third of the nineteenth century when Rafa'ah al-Tahtawi published his book, *Anwar Tawfiq-al-Falil fi Akhbar Misr wa Tawthiq bani Isma'il* (Cairo, 1258 a. h., p. 391). In 1887–89 'Ali Mubarak published *al-Khitat at-Tawfiqiyah li Misr al-Qahirah wa Muduniha wa biladiha al-Qadimah wa al-Shahirah*, in twenty-six volumes, one of which was devoted to Pharaonic Egypt hitherto ignored by Muslim writers and in which, under the title "The Science of Religion," he makes distinction between Egyptians and Arabs.

(52) Tarbin, A., *op., cit.*, p. 189.

(53) Faris, N., *op., cit.*, p. 188.

preferable to Arab nationalism since they recognized the fact that, as an ideology, Arab nationalism is rooted in the Islamic legacy.

Pharaonism suited British policy interests and the British exploited it to full advantage. Administrative posts were staffed by Copts in numbers exceeding their ratio to their Muslim compatriots. Pharaonism was played up in schools, journals and all sorts of publications, while the role of the Arabs in Egyptian civilization came under attack.[54]

Yet in spite of all concerted efforts to assert the ideology of Pharaonism at the expense of others, it remained on the whole an intellectual expression and a nostalgic force. It failed to sway the modern Egyptians into action, largely because it was out of touch with the cultural reality of Egyptian society whose Arabo-Islamic orientation could not be changed. With the Arabo-Islamic period the Egyptian had a living continuity as Pharaonic Egypt long since had been confined to the museum.[55]

Whereas Pharoanism was predominantly a particular ideology serving the interests of British policy, Islamism

(54) "Jamyat al-Tawfiq" of Jurjis Antun at one time was second only to "al-'Uraw al-Wuthqa"; in his *al-Qubt* (Cairo, 1932, p. 9), Jurjis Awad uses the term "Copt" exclusively in the secular sense and anonymously with the glorious era of Egypt's history which would embrace Muslim Egyptians as well. Coptic nationalism is also rampant in Ramzi Tadrus *al-Aqbat fi al-Qarn al-Ishrin*, Cairo: al-Jaridah, 1911.

(55) To be sure certain literary giants such as Taha Husayn and Ahmad Shawqi remained of the conviction that Pharaonism is ingrained in Egyptian thinking and argued that Egyptians ought not to lose their perspective as such (Huari, S.K. *al-'Ara wa Ahadith bi al-Wataniyah wa al Qawmiyah*, Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm, 1957. p. 96). As late as 1950 Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid was calling upon Egyptians to think in terms of Egyptianism. Ahmad Zaki insisted "we are Egyptians first." For more on this view see an article by Lutfi in the May 5, 1950 issue of *al-Musawwar*, Cairo; also Fawzi Muhammad's *Dirasat fi al-Qaumiyah al-Arabiyah*, Vol I, Cairo; al-Anjlu, 1959, p. 92.

was a broader ideology in appeal and scope drawing its partisans from the ranks of the rejectionists and revivalists. It served British policy interests when it preached solidarity with the Ottoman states; but with the demise of this state it became inimical. Believing that Muslims regardless of race, language and political divisions constitute one Islamic nation, literary figures and ulema influenced by the Azhar denounced Arab nationalism as un-Islamic in that Islam does not recognize the principle of nationality.[56] Islamism as an ideology gained increasing strength as the Western impact on Muslim lands mounted.[57] Moreover, many Egyptian Muslims felt that Egypt should assume the caliphate when it was vacated in 1924 by the "New Turks" of Mustafa Kamal. Among them there were those who could advocate Arabism and Islamism with no hesitation.[58]

The ideology of Islamism gave birth in 1923 to the "Ikhwan al-Muslimin" with which it moves from the realm of academia into the field of action. The Ikhwan came into existence to combat the growing Western impact on the minds of young Muslim Arabs.[59] Within twenty five years

---

(56) Mustafa al-Maraghi, one time rector of the Azhar, declared: Arab nationalism is of no concern to us; the ideology of Muslims is Islam as embodied in the Koran and the Shari'ah; see more on his views as they are expressed in *al-Jaridah* in Husri, S.K. *al-Ma Hiya al-Qawmiyah ?*, Beirut; Dar al-Ilm, 1959 p. 204.

(57) As expressed in the Muslim reaction to the revolt of the Egyptian countryside in 1924-25, the French bombardment of Damascus in 1925, the Wailing Wall incident in 1929's and the resistance of al-Zahir al-Barbari in North Africa to French Christianizing effort among Berbers in 1930.

(58) At the 1931 Islamic and Arab conferences held in Jerusalem, the Egyptian delegation defended the Islamic ideology at the first and the Arab ideology at the second; see *Majallat al-'Arab*, September 1932, No. 4 cited by Tarbin, A., *op. cit.*, O. 92.

(59) Husayni, I. M. *al-Ikhwan al-Muslim*, Beirut; Dar al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr, 1952. pp. 158-59.

it had established branches in every Arab country, aiming at the elimination not only of illiteracy but of Western imperialism as well. The Ikhwan called for a federation of the Arabo-Islamic world along lines achieved by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Although interested mainly in cultural and social matters, it was inevitable that the Ikhwan should find themselves involved in politics. The British, afraid of their growing strength, prevailed on the government of Sirri Pasha to confiscate their publications and suppress the movement. But their participation in the 1948 Palestine War gave them a new lease of life, albeit short-lived; for their agitation against the British led to their formal dissolution in December of 1948[60] Shortly thereafter the founder and driving force, Hasan al-Banna, was assassinated (February, 1949).

The Ikhwani movement was a pan-movement; to that extent its goals embraced the ideals of the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic ideologies. In their opposition to the Western political and cultural impact, they found common ground of action with the other pan-ideologies. Like pan-Arabism, it could not tolerate particular ideologies detracting from the main goal of liberation and unity. It called for the abolition of all political parties upholding centrifugal ideologies, as finally came to pass under Nasir. To them, as to the Ba'th, communism was a dangerous rival in terms of the ultimate goals sought.

Communism as a universalistic ideology is both alien and hostile because it seeks to compete for the same ultimate goals desired by pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism. It is the youngest of the pan-Ideologies in the Arab World, Making

(60) Consult *al-Ahzab*......, p. 75.

headway primarily during the past two decades.[61] If it managed to survive and make inroads into Arab societies, the credit belongs to the alliance it achieved with the other pan-ideologies intensely determined to eliminate the Western political impact, which serves conveniently the ends of Communism in the Arab World. Like the pan-Arab and pan-Islamic ideologies, Communism also opposed the particular and regional ideologies, as attested by their bloody clashes with the Syrian Nationalist Party in Syria and Lebanon and with the Ba'this in Iraq.

Its spokesmen in the 1930's had attacked all aspects of nationalistic ideologies and sought to interest partisans of Arab nationalism in the world-wide goals of Communism. But the Arab nationalists refused to be distracted from their struggle with the mandatory powers. Even when the fate of Palestine was being decided in the United Nations, the Arab Communists were still attempting to divert attention.[62] Hence the Communist ideology won over a few converts prior to the Palestine debacle. Only when the Soviet Union endorsed Arab nationalist aims did it come into any appreciable gains, and mostly in Iraq following the July 14, 1958, revolution.

No facet, however, of the Western impact evoked so violent a reaction to Western interest in Arab World as the ideology of Zionism. When the West espoused the aims of Zionism and worked actively to achieve them, the high water level of the Western impact was reached.

(61) Under Khalid Bekdash, the party surfaced for the first time in Syria in 1937-39, seeking respectability through its publication *sawt al-Sha'b*. The French quickly suppressed the publication and it was not until 1942, when the Soviet Union was fighting alongside with the Allies, that the party re-emerged. It was suppressed again in 1947, but gained acceptability in 1954 when the Soviet Union began to espouse the Arab cause against the West.

(62) Taha, R., *Fi Tariq al-Kifah*, Beirut: al-Maktab al-Tijari, 1959, p. 165.

In more ways than one, 1948 marks a keystone along the path of the Western impact on the ideological conflicts in the Arab World. Henceforth the resurgent Arab nationalist ideology sweeps before it every particular ideology previously associated with Western interests. Moving with a new dynamism and an uncompromising determination to block every possible path leading to a Western return, Arab nationalism rejected and continues to reject all schemes associated with the West: Fertile Crescent and Greater Syria unity, the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine. It toppled one-time spokesman of Arab nationalism—'Abdallah in Jordan, Faysal II and Nuri al-Sa'id in Iraq, Shishakli in Syria al-Khuri and Sham'un in Lebanon, the Wafd ministers in Egypt, when they refused to keep pace with the new dynamism instilled in the Arab nationalist ideology as a result of the reverses incurred over Palestine. It presided over the demise of particular and regional ideologies that had sought to obstruct its path, i. e. the Syrian Nationalist Party, the Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Communism in Syria and Egypt. And finally, it rendered almost completely ineffectual the preachings of particular ideologies such as Phoenicianism in Lebanon and Pharaonism in Egypt. Henceforth, the Arab nationalist ideology moves with a singular purpose in the direction of more clearly defined objectives. Splinter movements advocating Arabism in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and even Iraq rallied to close ranks behind the main driving force with Jamal Abd al-Nasir donning the mantle of leadership.

In his speech before the National Assembly on February 5, 1958, Nasir attacked the ideologies of separatism for what they had been: artificially contrived movements to divert attention and support from the Arab nationalist ideology which alone in its trying years remained faithful to its basic ideals to unite the Arab World and to insure a productive future for it.

INDEX

Printed at the Da'iratu'l-Ma'arif Press
Osmania University, Hyderabad—500007

INDEX

Printed at the Da'iratu'l-Ma'arif Press
Osmania University, Hyderabad—500007